ORIGIN, DESCENT, AND DESTRUCTION: TEXT AND CONTEXT IN BALINESE REPRESENTATIONS OF THE PAST

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—Dedicated to the memory of Tu Aji Sangka—

"It does not matter whether the world
is conceived to be real or only imagined;
the manner of making sense of it is the same."
(H. White)[1]

History, Literature, and Society

There are in Balinese literature no separate genres called "history" and "fiction." Consequently the distinction between true stories and (false) fantasies makes little sense, "since texts which are not considered 'true' are 'lies'."[2] The absence of "history" as a genre does,

An earlier version of this paper was presented at the conference on "Artistic Representation in Social Action: The Case of Bali," held at Princeton, July 8–13, 1991, which was financed by the US National Endowment for the Humanities and the Wenner-Gren Foundation. The research upon which the paper is based was conducted in 1982/83 and 1989. It was sponsored by LIPI and the Universitas Udayana in Denpasar, and financed by the Programme of Indonesian Studies (Jakarta/Leiden), the Netherlands Foundation for the Advancement of Tropical Research, and the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Amsterdam. The sections dealing with the *Babad Mengwi* are based upon a paper presented at the "7th European Colloquium on Indonesian and Malay Studies" in Bern, June 1989. I would like to thank Hildred Geertz, Jean-Francois Guermonprez, Hedi Hinzler, Raechelle Rubinstein, Adrian Vickers, Margaret Wiener, and Peter Worsley for their stimulating comments on the conference paper. I am especially grateful to the late I Gusti Ngurah Ketut Sangka from *Puri Gede* Krambitan for his generous assistance during my research and the many hours we spent discussing the *Babad Mengwi* and the *Kidung Nderet*.

[1] H. White, *Tropics of Discourse. Essays in Cultural Criticism* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), p. 98.

[2] Adrian Vickers, "Writing Indonesian History: Poststructuralism and Perception," *Asian Studies Association of Australia Review* 10 (1986): 15-21, p. 18. Since the early 1950s the Indonesian word *sejarah* is used for a Western kind of historiography in Bali. The first Balinese historian in this sense was the retired government official I

however, not mean that Balinese had, and have, no awareness of their past. On the contrary, many texts refer to the past in order to trace the origin of something, and, consequently, to demonstrate its truth. For origin and truth are twins. Even today many aspects of Balinese life are firmly rooted in the past. Whether it concerns religious concepts, temples, someone's health or status, or political relationships, the truth about the order of things can only be found(ed) in the past. The Old-Javanese *kakawin* classics are in this respect "extremely true" because they are seen as the oldest texts in which an eternal truth is revealed that exists "beyond the realm of the senses."[3]

As in many other societies, in Bali origin and descent are dynamic concepts which are used to structure the political order and articulate social differentiation.[4] If you ask a Balinese *who* he is, he will probably first tell you *what* he is: he will clarify what his position, or *linggih*, is by mentioning the (kind of) descent group to which he belongs. Balinese identify themselves in general by referring in terms of time and place to an ancestor in a distant past, and a point of origin (*kawitan*) which is often materialized in a temple shrine. If a Balinese does not know where his *kawitan* is, he often does not know who his ancestor is, and, hence, neither what and who he himself is. Under these circumstances, his position within the social hierarchy is obscure and he may feel disoriented (*paling*) and even seriously ill. The *kawitan* is in this respect a point of reference in life, for it is in this spot that the progeny meet their ancestor, and their position in life is firmly "anchored" in the past. In order to know one's relationship with a specific ancestor *cum kawitan*, and to commemorate this, many descent groups—nobles as well as commoners—possess a genealogical narrative, or *babad*, in which their origin and descent are explained. Both *kawitan* and *babad* form the linkages between the ancestor and the present; they are vehicles for group identity. They, however, do nothing, unless they are put into action:

> The family where we lived in 1983 was one of the richest in the village, and claimed to be of rather high noble descent. This was reflected in the title of our landlord (*I Gusti*, but he preferred to be called *Agung*), while his sons have the even higher title *I Gusti Ngurah*. Many people in the village remembered however that the grandfather of our landlord had the humble title *Si* (from *Gusi*, which is lower than *Gusti*), which placed him at the edge of the nobility, and they made jokes about the current *inflasi* of noble titles.[5]

> Since my landlord knew that I had my doubts about the historical validity of his noble status, he decided to put the record straight. He invited us to accompany him to the birthday (*odalan*) of his *kawitan* in the old temple Pura Sada in the village of Kapal. After

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Nyoman Djelada from Gianyar. Under the pseudonym Gora Sirikan he compiled in the late 1950s or early 1960s the first *Sejarah Bali* (unpubl., 3 vols.) in the Indonesian language, which is based on Balinese and Dutch sources.

[3] Cf. Raechelle Rubinstein, "Beyond the Realm of the Senses: The Balinese Ritual of Kekawin Composition" (Ph.D. thesis, Department of Indonesian and Malayan Studies, University of Sydney, 1988).

[4] With respect to Austronesian studies, Jim Fox has stipulated that "[t]he reason that the study of 'origin structures' is so important is that these are not abstract or neutral structures. They exist for a social purpose since they establish precedence. They determine who are first, foremost, elder, superior, greater, or occupy the center. They provide symbolic arguments for the varied status differences of the Austronesians." J. J. Fox, "Origin, Descent, and Precedence in the Study of Austronesian Societies" (Public Lecture on Indonesian Studies, Leiden University, 1988), p. 15.

[5] The rise of this family in terms of wealth and status started during the colonial period, when several family members became local agents of the Balinese district officer (*punggawa*) who rewarded their loyalty with privileges. See Henk Schulte Nordholt, "Een Balische Dynastie; Hiërarchie en Conflict in de Negara Mengwi 1700–1940" (PhD dissertation, Faculty of Social Sciences, Free University Amsterdam, 1988), pp. 277–80.

he had prayed before a shrine called *kawitan Celuk* he said to me: "Have you seen it? I prayed there and no-one stopped me. I am an Agung Celuk."

A few months later it was announced that the *babad* of the family was going to be read by a Brahman priest in the house temple. This happened at the request of a group of people from Buleleng who were in search of their *kawitan*. In Buleleng they were considered to be commoners whereas they themselves were convinced they belonged to the noble descent group of Agung (or *Arya*) Celuk. They hoped to find the final proof for this in the *babad* of our family. Unfortunately a possible Buleleng Connection was not mentioned in the *babad*.

Towards the end of the reading the youngest brother of our landlord suddenly left the house temple. When I asked him why he did so he answered: "Ya I've just been mentioned."

"Don't you want to hear the full story?"

"I have heard my name. I know I'm part of it, that's enough."

Through the act of praying, which was not prevented by other people in the temple, my landlord had not only made a clear statement about his position, but he had also connected his present status with its origin. Past and present were, in other words, united, hence: once an Agung, always an Agung. The answer of his youngest brother, and the disappointment of the strangers from Buleleng, illustrate that temple and text belong to each other. If you're not on the list, you have (at least in this case) no access to the *kawitan*.

The answer of the youngest brother also illustrates a kind of reading which differs quite a lot from the approach of conventional Western philologists. Convinced of the superiority of Western knowledge and in the wake of colonial expansion, they introduced their own criteria concerning the past and truth. Time was inflexible and linear and had become a synonym of Progress; history consisted of a chronological chain of "true facts," and "unreliable data" were classified as myths and legends.

"Origin" remained nevertheless a focus of interest for the Western scholar who tried to make sense of Oriental societies like Bali. But instead of tracing an eternal divine order (or recognizing the relative time distance between past and present), he wanted to locate the origin and slow evolutionary development of political institutions like village, kingdom, dynasty, and law. Once these institutions were traced they could be modified (or "restored") and incorporated into the colonial power structure. Within the framework of the colonial state the past was not used to grasp a divine truth but to provide a legitimate and efficient basis for Western dominance. Origin and legitimation became the colonial twins.

In this context a specific genre of genealogical narratives of the Balinese nobility (*babad*) attracted the attention of Western scholars and colonial officials. These texts were rather familiar to Western readers since they resembled in a way medieval European chronicles. For many years *babad* were indeed called chronicles (Dutch: *kronieken*) and as such classified as primitive historiography. *Babad* became a kind of second-best historical source, to be consulted when European archives failed to provide enough information. Such an approach was, for instance, advocated by the Dutch historian H. J.de Graaf in his studies on Javanese history.[6] Historians like De Graaf were primarily interested in political history, and during

[6] See for instance H. J. de Graaf, *De moord op Kapitein Francois Tack, 8 Febr. 1686* (Amsterdam: Paris, 1935); "De historische betrouwbaarheid der Javaansche overlevering" *Bijdragen tot de Taal, Land- en Volkenkunde* (hereafter *BKI*) 112 (1956): 55–73; idem, "Later Javanese Sources and Historiography," in *An Introduction to Indonesian Histo-*

their fact-finding missions through indigenous manuscripts they asked the well-known who-when-and-where questions about political events and leaders. "Facts" and their reliability were in this context not a subject of philosophical reflection but mere objective events which could be traced in the written texts.

Initially the Javanist C. C. Berg also believed that *babad* were reliable sources provided that all the available texts and versions were collected, scrutinized, and compared.[7] Not long afterwards, however, Berg changed his mind and became the foremost opponent of De Graaf. While De Graaf concentrated on the "realistic" parts of a text in order to find "reliable facts," Berg argued that these texts consisted of constructed myths. He interpreted these myths as magical acts, which contain an inner logic and served specific political purposes. Through a complex series of deconstructions, Berg tried to reveal the hidden messages of the text in order to uncover the "real" historical information. He maintained that Javanese "historiography" deliberately constructed a past that not only legitimized the present but also exorcized the doom of decay.[8]

Since it is almost impossible to follow Berg in his labyrinth of arguments and most of his conclusions are highly debatable, he never had many followers. De Graaf's approach, on the other hand, fitted much better within the conventional historiography of Indonesia which concentrated on the reliability of indigenous texts as historical sources.

Since the 1970s, the "reliability" approach came under attack when a more sophisticated debate developed on the nature of *babad* and related texts. Quite suddenly the historian's domain—but also that of the anthropologist—was invaded by challenging ideas from the field of literary theory. A *babad* was no longer seen as an imperfect archival document but had to be treated in the very first place as a "text."[9]

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riography, ed. Soedjatmoko *et al.* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1965), pp. 119–36. In his time De Graaf was a modern historian because he was not exclusively interested in pure colonial history like most of his colleagues. He was also one of the very few who used indigenous source material.

[7] This ambitious—and impossible—project resulted only in three publications: C. C. Berg, *De middeljavaansche historische traditie* (Santpoort: Mees, 1927); *Kidung Pamancangah: de geschiedenis van het rijk Gelgel* (Santpoort: Mees, 1929); *Babad Bla-batuh* (Santpoort: Mees, 1932).

[8] See for instance, C. C. Berg, "Javaansche geschiedschrijving," in *Geschiedenis van Nederlandsch-Indië*, ed. F. W. Stapel (Amsterdam: Joost van den Vondel, vol. II, 1938), pp. 5–148; idem, "De Sadeng-oorlog en de mythe van Groot-Majapahit," *Indonesië* 5 (1951/52): 385–422; idem, "Javanese Historiography. A Synopsis of its Evolution," in *Historians of Southeast Asia*, ed. D.G.E. Hall (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), pp. 13–23; idem, "The Javanese Picture of the Past," in *Introduction to Indonesian Historiography*, ed. Soedjatmoko, pp. 87–117.

[9] For a discussion on the nature of Javanese *babad, see* amongst others: L. F. Brakel, "Dichtung und Wahrheit, Some Notes on the Development of Indonesian Historiography," *Archipel* 20 (1980): 35–44; A. Day, "Review of A. Kumar, *Surapati, Man and Legend* (Leiden 1978)," *BKI* 134 (1978): 367–70; idem, "Babad Kandha, Babad Kraton and Variation in Modern Javanese Literature," *BKI* 134 (1978): 433–50; idem, "Ranggawarsita's Prophecy of Mystery," in *Moral Order and the Question of Change: Essays on Southeast Asian Thought*, ed. D. K. Wyatt & A. Woodside (New Haven: Yale University, Southeast Asia Studies, Monograph Series 24, 1982); idem, "The Drama of Bangung Tapa's exile in Ambon," in *Centres, Symbols, and Hierarchies: Essays on the Classical States of Southeast Asia*, ed. L. Gesick (New Haven: Yale University, Southeast Asia Studies, Monograph Series 26, 1983), pp. 125–93; A. Kumar, *Surapati, Man and Legend: A Study of Three Babad Traditions* (Leiden: Brill, 1976); idem, "On Variation in Babads," *BKI* 140 (1984): 223–47; J. J. Ras, "The Babad Tanah Jawi and its Reliability: Questions of Content, Structure and Function," in *Cultural Contact and Textual Interpretation*, ed. C. D. Grijns & S. O. Robson (Dordrecht: Foris, 1986), pp. 246–73; M. C. Ricklefs, "A Consideration of Three Versions of the Babad Tanah Djawi, with Excerpts on the Fall of Majapahit," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 35 (1972): 285–315; idem, "Javanese Sources in the Writing of Modern Javanese History," in *Southeast Asian History and Historiography: Essays Presented to D.G.E. Hall*, ed. C. D. Cowan & O. W. Wolters (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1976), pp. 332–44; idem, "The Evolution of Babad Tanah Jawi Texts; In Response to Day," *BKI* 135 (1979): 443–54; idem,

One of the first to advocate this view with regard to a Balinese *babad* was Peter Worsley.[10] He not only edited and translated the *Babad Buleleng* according to the best philological standards of Leiden, but also presented an innovative analysis in which the literary structure of the text was emphasized. Teeuw summarized this new approach as follows: "The narrative has a logic of its own, it possesses an inner necessity, a built-in propelling force, determined by the laws of the story as such."[11] It is, in other words, not history, but literary conventions which largely determine the sequence of the story.

Another protagonist of this literary approach is Gijs Koster. In his analysis of a Malay *syair* dealing with the war between Makassar and the Dutch in 1668–1669, he opposes Skinner's opinion that the text does contain reliable historical information.[12] Instead, Koster argues that the *syair* is organized according to specific literary conventions and is basicslly concerned with moral issues which are represented in a quasi historical setting. The text is not intended to give a precise account of what "actually" happened, but formulates some of the crucial dilemmas in the relationship between rulers and vassals in the Malay world. True authority (*daulat*) versus false authority, and true vassalage versus false vassalage are elaborated through specific "formulaic systems," and located in particular "type-scenes."[13]

By emphasizing the intertextuality and intratextuality of the *syair*, Koster concludes that the text has no historical reliability. This is probably true if the reliability issue is strictly confined to the conventional level of "facts," but it leaves questions regarding the contextuality of the text largely unanswered. Why, for instance, were certain "formulaic systems" and "type-scenes" constructed, and not others? What was so important about true or false *daulat*? Why was the war with the Dutch chosen to elaborate certain moral issues? What was, in short, the significance of these issues within the seventeenth-century Malay world?

At least a partial answer to these questions is given in an article by Gijs Koster and Henk Maier on the power of Malay narrative.[14] They argue that the well-known dichotomy between fact and fiction, which implies almost automatically a classification of texts in historical and non-historical genres, is misleading. Instead, other criteria are needed to distinguish

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"Indonesian History and Literature," in *Dari Babad dan Hikayat sampai Sejarah Kritis. Kumpulan karangan dipersembahkan kepada Prof. Dr. Sartono Kartodirdjo*, ed. T. I. Alfian *et al.* (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1987), pp. 199–210; A. Teeuw, "Some Remarks on the Study of so-called Historical Texts in Indonesian Languages," in *Profiles of Malay Culture*, ed. Sartono Kartodirdjo (Jakarta: P.& K., 1976), pp. 3–26; idem, "Indonesia as a 'Field of Literary Study'. A Case Study: Genealogical Narrative Texts as an Indonesian Literary Genre," in *Unity in Diversity: Indonesia as a Field of Anthropological Study*, ed. P. E. de Josselin de Jong (Dordrecht: Foris, 1984), pp. 38–59; idem, "The Text," in *Variation, Transformation and Meaning. Studies on Indonesian Literatures in Honour of A. Teeuw*, ed. J. J. Ras & S. O. Robson (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1991), pp. 211–29; Vickers, "Writing Indonesian History."

As for anthropology, Clifford Geertz argued that Balinese rituals could and should be read as "texts" (C. Geertz, *Negara. The Theatre State in Nineteenth Century Bali* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980)), while anthropological writings should be read as rhetorical "texts" as well. Cf. J. Clifford & G. Marcus, eds., *Writing Culture. The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986) and C. Geertz, *Works and Lives: The Anthropologist as Author* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988).

[10] P. J. Worsley, *Babad Buleleng. A Balinese Dynastic Genealogy* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1972).

[11] Teeuw, "Some Remarks," p. 16.

[12] G. L. Koster, "The Kerajaan at War: On the Genre Heroic-Historical Syair," in *Papers of the Fourth Indonesian-Dutch Historical Conference, Yogyakarta 24–29 July 1983, vol. II, Literature and History*, ed. Taufik Abdullah (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1986), pp. 30–72; C. Skinner, *Sya'ir Perang Mengkasar* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1963); Cf. C. Skinner, *The Battle for Junk Ceylon* (Dordrecht: Foris, 1985).

[13] Koster, "Kerajaan at War," pp. 48–49.

[14] G. L. Koster & H.M.J. Maier, "A Medicine of Sweetmeats: On the Power of Malay Narrative," *BKI* 141 (1985): 411–61.

different genres of Malay literature. Therefore Koster and Maier concentrate on the internal quality of the texts. It appears, then, that texts like the *Sejarah Melayu* emphasize certain moral values, whereas texts like the *syair Ken Tambuhan* are emotionally "soothing."

At this point one would perhaps expect that there is hardly anything left for the historian to look for in these texts, since moral values and emotions are not the kind of "facts" he is used to dealing with. This is not the case, because Koster and Maier introduce here the notion of "referential information."[15] By this they refer to the enormous amount of information in different genres of texts which represent various aspects of Malay life and political attitudes. Although this kind of information is wrapped in literary conventions, and often ambiguous, it is nevertheless worthwhile exploring this field in order to gather historical information about the nature, and perhaps even the mentality of Malay politics.

The examples drawn by Koster and Maier from Malay literature show a certain similarity with Balinese texts in which the past is represented. Adrian Vickers has argued that Balinese texts can also be classified according to their internal qualities. He mentions in this respect three genres—*kakawin, babad,* and *gaguritan*—"which represent different discourses about social action, moral being and the nature of desire and emotion."[16] In the following sections I will elaborate his point through a preliminary analysis of two specific texts—a *babad* and a *gaguritan*—which refer to the South Balinese kingdom (*negara*) of Mengwi. I will consider especially the political aspects of these texts concerning the creation, the nature, and the limitations of the Balinese *negara.* In particular, I will argue that the *babad* emphasizes—and creates—order and continuity, whereas the *gaguritan* analyzes disorder and destruction. This rough distinction helps to clarify one of the basic dynamics of the old Balinese system: the ongoing quest for life which was time and again threatened by violence and chaos.[17]

In the next sections the relationship between the structure of the texts and the historical developments in South Bali are investigated. First I will discuss the rise of the *negara* Mengwi as reflected by the *babad;* then a political crisis, which is represented by the *gaguritan,* will be looked at; finally, I will show how the nature of the *babad* changed under colonial rule.

Babad Mengwi: Origin, Descent, and Order

The literary approach as advocated by Worsley is extremely helpful, but two comments should be made here. Although the *Babad Buleleng* is, at least for the time being, the only text available in English translation, it is by no means *the* standard model of the Balinese *babad.* I will argue that it is a rather atypical and recent "literary" text, since most of the *babad* I am familiar with are rather straightforward genealogical accounts. Second, and more important, is that, because of the emphasis he laid on the literary structure of the text, Worsley tended to ignore the political significance of the *babad* within a specific historical context. *Babad* were not written in order to be studied in Western libraries by literary experts, or historians in search of "reliable facts."[18] Going beyond the narrow and unproductive fact-fiction di-

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[15] ibid., p. 458.

[16] Vickers, "Writing Indonesian History," p. 18.

[17] See Schulte Nordholt, "Een Balische Dynastie,"ch. 5, and H. Schulte Nordholt, *State, Village, and Ritual in Bali. A Historical Perspective* (Amsterdam: VU University Press, CASA Comparative Asian Studies 7, 1991), pp. 7–11.

[18] For an illustration of such an approach, see Ricklefs' statement that Balinese *babad* are "so devoid of chronological order that they are of little value as source of political history despite their literary interest," M. C. Rick-

chotomy, *babad* should in the first place be considered as a way Balinese look(ed) at their own past, and as a means to construct—and re-phrase—that past in order to make the present meaningful. If *babad* are treated as political documents and "brought back" (at least as far as possible) into the context in which they were written and read, these texts may offer important historical information. I will argue that these genealogical narratives reflect an ongoing dialectic between changing political contexts and reformulated representations of the past.[19]

How *babad* operate as vehicles for identity and how representations of the Balinese past are related to specific political contexts will be illustrated by a preliminary discussion of the *Babad Mengwi*. First, I will give a brief summary of what is today considered to be the main version of the text.[20] Then I will compare several aspects of the narrative with political changes which occurred in Bali between 1650 and 1730. I will argue that the *babad* seeks to explain those changes by reconnecting past and present in a meaningful way to establish continuity and order.

The narrative starts by introducing the powerful king of Mengwi, I Gusti Agung Ngurah Made Agung. He not only controls Mengwi in South Bali, but also Buleleng in the north, Jembrana in the west, and even Blambangan in East Java. The king of Mengwi is powerful and respected, but he has a serious problem: he does not know who his ancestors are. Therefore he calls his Brahman priest and asks him to tell the story of his ancestors. Then, in a question and answer dialogue between king and priest, a genealogical narrative is unfolded. It is told that the king descends in a direct line from King Airlangga of the East Javanese kingdom of Kadiri, which later became part of Majapahit.

During the heyday of Majapahit rule Bali was conquered and an East Javanese dynasty settled down in Gelgel, while lesser lords (*Arya*), who had also come from Java, were in control of parts of Bali. The most important of these *Arya* stayed in Gelgel where he, and his descendants, became second in command (*patih*).

The *patih* of Gelgel belonged to the noble descent group of Arya Kepakisan, who descended from the old East Javanese kingdom of Kadiri.

The *babad* mentions several violent conflicts in Gelgel in which the position of the king, or *Dalem*, was challenged. A disruptive crisis occurred when one of the *patih*—Agung DiMade, who also descended from Arya Kepakisan—revolted successfully against the ruler of Gelgel. After several years, however, this *patih* was defeated by a coalition of lords who were still loyal to the Gelgel dynasty. They restored the dynasty in nearby Klungkung, where from then on the ruler with the highest esteem resided with the title *Dewa Agung*.

In the meantime the defeated *patih* had managed to escape and went with his family to West Bali. The *babad* tells about the wanderings, the marriages, and alliances of the refugees, as well as their sacred heirlooms (*kris*). Special attention is paid to a long and complicated fight between two lineages out of which one emerged as the winner. And it

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lefs, *A Modern History of Indonesia* (London: MacMillan, 1981), p. 52. For a more balanced view, see Ricklefs, "Indonesian History and Literature."

[19] Cf. J. R. Bowen, "Narrative Form and Political Incorporation: Changing Uses of History in Aceh, Indonesia," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 31 (1989): 671–93.

[20] *Babad Mengwi* (Denpasar: Parisada Hindu Dharma, 1974); University Library Leiden University (hereafter U.B. Leiden), Or.19.036; a translation in Malay is in the Algemeen Rijksarchief (hereafter ARA), Den Haag, Archive Ministerie van Koloniën, Verbaal 26-4-1940-9.

was into this lineage that the man who eventually established the new royal center of Mengwi was born.

Actually he started with a defeat, after which he took refuge in northern Tabanan. During his stay there he visited Mount Mangu where he received a vision in which his future realm was revealed. Then he started again, this time successfully. And when he had finally defeated all his enemies, this same man wanted to know who his ancestors were.

[At this point the dialogue between priest and king ends, which seems to suggest that this part of the narrative is perhaps an older text to which at a later stage other episodes were added.[21]]

The *babad* then tells how the first king of Mengwi became the most powerful man in Bali. He did so by the physical force derived from his *kris*. He defeated all his enemies personally and extended his control and influence in concentric circles. First, local lords were defeated. Then, most of the more powerful lords in the areas around Mengwi were subjugated, while other lords surrendered without warfare. One opponent, however, could not be defeated, and that was the *Pasek* of Buduk. But eventually the *Pasek* surrendered and allowed the king to kill him on the condition that a special shrine be erected to commemorate him.[22]

Having established his power domain, the king of Mengwi exercised control over the conquered areas through a network of lineages which were headed by his sons—who are all listed—while a few autonomous lords respected the king's authority.

The first king also established his royal center in the village of Mengwi, which consisted of a crossroads, a palace (*puri*), and the temple (*pura*) Taman Ayun, which was venerated by all the subjects of the ruler.[23] [In other words: the *negara* Mengwi was finally established.]

The next episode relates how the king of Mengwi expanded his influence even further by defeating the old ruler of Buleleng, Gusti Panji Sakti. As a result, Mengwi conquered not only Buleleng, but also Jembrana in West Bali and Blambangan in East Java, which belonged to the sphere of influence of Panji Sakti. After this glorious victory a member of a prominent Brahman family of Buleleng was brought to Mengwi and became the senior priest (*purohita*) of the Mengwi king. It was this priest who told the king the story of his ancestors.

Expansion had its limits. That became clear when Mengwi was struck by a disease [probably cholera] personified by a wicked magician, *balian* Batur. The disease occurred when Mengwi started to expand its influence towards the east, i.e. Klungkung, residence of the Dewa Agung. The evil *balian* could only be defeated by a magic bullet which was in the possession of the Dewa Agung.[24] In order to use this bullet the king of Mengwi

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[21] The literary model of a dialogue between the king and his priest has been derived from old Indian texts (personal communication Hedi Hinzler).

[22] This episode refers perhaps to conflicts between the emerging noble house and representatives of local commoner elites, like *pasek* and *bendesa*, who still dominated certain areas at that time.

[23] Actually the *babad* tells that the first king created two centers: first a small one in the northern part of Mengwi, which was later replaced by a much larger one in the southern part of the village.

[24] See also Barbara Lovric, "Bali: Myth, Magic and Morbidity," in *Death and Disease in Southeast Asia. Explorations in Social, Medical and Demographic History*, ed. N. G. Owen (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 117–41, 132–36.

had to respect the authority of the Dewa Agung and refrain from further expansion. The *balian* was killed and his defeat resulted in a reconciliation between the powerful king of Mengwi and the dynasty of Gelgel/Klungkung. The revolt of the *patih* (who was an ancestor of the Mengwi dynasty) against the throne of Gelgel was now forgiven. The king of Mengwi recognized the Dewa Agung as his superior, and the Dewa Agung acknowledged the ruler of Mengwi as his "*patih.*"

The last episodes of the *babad* consist of a series of battles which threatened the continuity of the Mengwi dynasty. One of the most dramatic moments in this respect is the heroic and exemplary death of Gusti Agung Panji, son of the king and heir to the throne of Mengwi. Deserted by allied lords, he decides to face a rebellious lord alone. He knows that he can not win the fight, but instead of a shameful withdrawal prefers to die as a hero. Eventually he is killed when the enemy crushes his genitals with a stone.[25]

Other rebellions by local lords, as well as leaders of lineages of the dynasty, illustrate the instability of royal rule in Mengwi. Especially successions to the throne were accompanied by outbursts of warfare and bitter fights between royal lineages. The *babad* relates these events but emphasizes how eventually strong kings succeeded in establishing—even if temporarily—their authority through the violent destruction of their opponents.

Finally, during the reign of the third king, the *negara* Mengwi experienced its most prosperous period, and hierarchy and order were firmly established.

This *babad* is a careful construction of the past which explains the origin of the Mengwi dynasty, the establishment of the *negara*, its internal ranking order, as well as the relationship between Mengwi and Klungkung. The story demonstrates that good kings were men of prowess and emphasizes, moreover, the continuity of Mengwi rule despite the numerous violent threats it had to face. In the following pages I will investigate the political importance of this *babad* and the relationship between the structure of this text and the historical context of Bali around 1700 through a comparison with other source material.[26] I will in particular concentrate on three interrelated themes. The first is the image of an unbroken continuity from the East Javanese king Airlangga through the kingdoms of Majapahit and Gelgel to the Mengwi dynasty; the second is the image of the first king as an "epoch ruler," who not only founded the dynasty and created a royal center, but expanded the *negara* in concentric circles as well;[27] the third is the way the political hierarchy within the *negara* is expressed through kinship terms. These themes provide important "referential information" about Balinese politics in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Seen from a Western historical point of view it seems unlikely that there has been an unbroken genealogical continuity between Java and Mengwi as described in the *babad*.[28] Although it is generally assumed that Bali was conquered by troops from Majapahit in

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[25] This illustrates nicely how in Bali power is represented in terms of potency. For similar notions of power in terms of honor and physical appearance in southern Europe, see Anton Blok, "Eerende fysieke persoon," *Tijdschrift voor Socialie Geschiedenis* 18 (1980): 211–30.

[26] These include a large but still incomplete body of Balinese *babad* and other texts, scattered information from VOC (Dutch East India Company) sources, and fieldwork material like oral traditions, information derived from temples, and ritual practices and relationships. See, for a more detailed discussion, Schulte Nordholt, "Een Balische Dynastie," pp. 19–72.

[27] I borrow the term "epoch ruler" from D. P. Henige, *The Chronology of Oral Tradition: Quest for a Chimera* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), pp. 34–37.

[28] See, for detailed information and sources, Schulte Nordholt, "Een Balische Dynastie," pp. 19–31.

1343,[29] most of the genealogies of Balinese noble families cannot be traced back in time beyond 1500. There is consequently a "gap" in Balinese history of at least 150 years about which hardly anything is known.[30] Hedi Hinzler has, moreover, shown that in Balinese texts written during the heyday of the Gelgel period (1550–1630) no mention is made of a connection between Gelgel and Majapahit.[31] This leads to the hypothesis that the Gelgel court made no attempts to trace its descent explicitly to Majapahit. As far as we know now, the "Majapahit fever," as Hinzler called it, was to come much later, after 1700.[32]

External threats between 1550 and 1670, combined with an internal reorganization of power relationships between 1650 and 1730, may have helped to develop a new conceptual framework in Bali in which Majapahit became explicitly the point of origin of the Balinese political order.

From 1550 onwards Bali was more and more surrounded by expanding Islamized power centers in Central Java and Makassar. With respect to East Java, the tensions between the Javanese realm Mataram and Bali resulted in a protracted battle for Blambangan, while Lombok was threatened by raids from Makassar. I suppose that the resistance in Bali against these unwanted pressures, which also damaged the economic interests of the Balinese rulers, were phrased in anti-Islamic terms. There are clear indications of firm anti-Islam sentiments among the Balinese nobility, which may have been reinforced by a recent immigration of Brahman priests from East Java. The new conceptualization, in which the by-then vanished realm of Majapahit became the exemplary model of the old Hindu-inspired order, may have helped to formulate a more distinct Balinese identity.[33]

Perhaps even more important was the period of internal warfare around the middle of the seventeenth century in Bali which resulted in the fall of Gelgel shortly after 1650.

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[29] *Nagarakertagama* Canto 49, Stanza 4; T.G.Th. Pigeaud, *Java in the 14th Century. A Study in Cultural History*, 5 vols. (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1960–63). It is in this respect more relevant to look at the interaction between Java and Bali over a much longer period of time, instead of searching for one decisive event in one particular year.

[30] See also Berg, "Javaansche geschiedschrijving," pp. 126–27. There are alternative dates available for the establishment of the Gelgel court. A *Babad Bhumi*—a list of dramatic events plus dates—mentions for instance that the first ruler of Gelgel came to Bali in *Saka* 1378, which is AD 1456 ; Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, Leiden (hereafter KITLV), Coll. Korn, Or. 435, no. 232.

[31] H. Hinzler, "The Usana Bali as a Source of History," in *Papers of the Indonesian-Dutch Historical Conference*, ed. Abdullah, pp. 124–62. Instead, emphasis is laid on an earlier connection between Java and Bali, in the eleventh century, when gods and sages established a new religious *cum* political order in Bali. This is elaborated in the *kakawin* version of the *Usana Bali*. In a later prose version gods and sages were replaced by Majapahit nobles.

[32] Substantial doubt can also be raised whether Arya Kepakisan—the ancestor of the *patih* of Gelgel and the Mengwi dynasty—was a historical figure. At least some versions of two texts with considerable authority do not mention him among the nobles who supposedly conquered Bali in 1343, i.e., *Raja Purana Besakih*, KITLV, Coll. Korn, Or. 435, no. 253; *Babad Dalem*, Gedong Kirtya, Singaraja, no. 1252. In an official edition of the *Babad Dalem* Arya Kepakisan is indeed mentioned, but this seems to be a recent "correction" by the editors; see I Wayan Warna *et al.* eds., *Babad Dalem, Teks dan Terjemahan* (Denpasar: P. & K., 1986), p. 6.

[33] See Schulte Nordholt, "Een Balische Dynastie," pp. 12–14; C. Wessels, "Een Portugese missiepoging op Bali in 1635," *Studiën* 99 (1923): 433–43; H. J. de Graaf, "Lombok in de 17e eeuw," *Djawa* 21 (1941): 355–74. See on the genealogical narratives of Brahmans, Raechelle Rubinstein, "The Brahmana According to Their Babad," in *State and Society in Bali. Historical, Textual and Anthropological Approaches*, ed. H. Geertz (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1991), pp. 43–84.

Blambangan was a rich area with a lucrative trade in rice and slaves. The Dutch were perhaps the most important "allies" of Bali because VOC campaigns defeated the power centers threatening the island. I do not mean to say that "Hindu-Bali" was totally isolated from the outside world. On the contrary, both coastal Java and Bali were part of the same Pasisir culture. Cf. Adrian Vickers, "Hinduism and Islam in Indonesia: Bali and the Pasisir World," *Indonesia* 44 (October 1987): 31–58.

According to VOC reports, there was in 1650 a revolt in Gelgel which was led by a certain "Gusti Agong."[34] It is, I think, not unreasonable to suppose that this man was the *patih* of Gelgel who is mentioned in the *Babad Mengwi*. There are, however, different versions of the events following this revolt. According to the *Babad Mengwi, patih* Gusti Agung managed to escape from Gelgel after his defeat and became the ancestor of the Mengwi dynasty. This is contradicted by VOC reports as well as Balinese sources, which reveal that the rebellious *patih* was killed in 1686 by troops who were loyal to the old Gelgel dynasty.[35] Moreover, various Balinese *babad* reveal different stories about the precise origin of the Mengwi dynasty.[36] We may therefore safely conclude that a direct genealogical link between Java and Bali, and between Gelgel and Mengwi, is highly unlikely.

Why these genealogical connections were considered to be so relevant will become clear when one looks at the outcome of the internal quest for power in Bali between 1650 and 1730. This brings us also to the second theme: the founding and concentric expansion of the *negara* Mengwi by one "epoch ruler." In this respect the chronological order of the main version of the *Babad Mengwi* is less important than the elaboration of specific themes. In this regard the structure of the *babad* shows the same characteristics as the *Babad Buleleng*. Although the *babad* has a chronological framework, marked by the succession of generations, Worsley argues that the narrative was structured by literary criteria.[37] With regard to the *babad* Mengwi, I think however that a combination of political and literary criteria organized the arrangement of the text.

Despite the attention paid to internal conflicts, warfare, and the instability of royal rule, the *babad* nevertheless emphasizes genealogical continuity and sketches a consistent process of *negara*-formation which can be divided into certain phases: origin, descent, development of leadership, establishment of a local power basis, gradual expansion, establishment of a royal center, further expansion, reinforcement of a Bali-wide ranking order, internal crisis, recovery, prosperity.

Looking at the other available sources a different picture of Mengwi history emerges. Instead of the more-or-less "planned" and "streamlined" process of expansion, we are confronted with an erratic sequence of events with many more conflicts and dramatic moments. Instead of one leader who personified the emergence of the dynasty, there were at least two kings—a father and a son—who together founded the *negara* Mengwi. Whereas the *babad* gives the impression that the founding process lasted only a few years and consisted of a

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[34] Instead of one revolt, there may have been a gradual erosion of royal authority in Gelgel due to unstable successions. For a recent evaluation of source material, see Helen Creese, "Balinese Babad as Historical Sources: A Reinterpretation of the Fall of Gelgel," *BKI* 147 (1991): 236–60.

[35] In a letter from the Dewa Agung to Batavia from 1686 it is stated that "Gusti Agung, with some 1200 people, had been attacked by the enemy and beaten to death in the *negorije* Gilgil . . . by a certain Loera Batoe Lepang, who commanded the enemy's troops and who also fell in that place." KITLV, Coll. H. J. de Graaf H.1055, no. 8. This incident is confirmed by a version of the *Babad Bhumi:* in 1686 Gusti Agung was killed by Gusti [Batu] Lepang; KITLV, Coll. Korn Or.435, no. 232.

[36] Some sources indicate a West Balinese origin, others mention a member of another, rival lineage as the ancestor of the Mengwi dynasty. For a summary, see Schulte Nordholt, "Een Balische Dynastie," pp. 20–21.

[37] Worsley, *Babad Buleleng*, p. 81. On Balinese notions of time and history and the way certain dramatic events were related to texts in order to put them in a larger meaningful context, see Adrian Vickers, "Balinese Texts and Historiography," *History and Theory* 29 (1990): 158–78.

few decisive battles, it turns out that it took both leaders more than forty years (1690-1730) to succeed, while they were virtually on the move all the time.[38]

According to these other texts, expansion did not occur in concentric circles, but consisted of a complex set of oscillating processes. The leaders of Mengwi started their career probably among the local nobility of the village of Kapal. After losing their local power basis in Kapal, they were protected by the neighboring king of Tabanan and moved to the village of Blayu, where they became followers of the powerful lord of North Bali, Panji Sakti. As subordinate followers, they accompanied the son of Panji Sakti on his campaign to Blambangan in 1697. Rather than slowly expanding their new power base in Blayu, they soon intervened in a succession war in Buleleng in 1704, and managed to overrule the Buleleng dynasty. As a result, they suddenly controlled Blayu, Buleleng, and Blambangan for a while. Only then did they settle down in Mengwi and start to expand their influence in South Bali. It was, moreover, not the first but the third ruler who eventually built the new *puri* and the temple Taman Ayun in Mengwi by the middle of the eighteenth century.

It is my hypothesis that two complementary criteria may have helped the composers of the text to restructure the rather chaotic past into ordered and meaningful sets of events. These were a literary device to reduce a series of complex processes into a few "summarizing events," combined with a desire to counteract the threat of disorder by the creation of an orderly past with a logical developmental pattern. Political control, once established, implied an ordered control of the past.[39]

J. H. Plumb has remarked that ". . . outbreaks of genealogical fever occur most frequently when new classes are emerging into status, a new faction pushing its way into an ancient society, or when the established ruling class feel threatened by the nouveau riches."[40] A similar situation existed in Bali at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The reorganization of power relationships in Bali following the revolt in Gelgel (1650–1686) resulted in the emergence of several new coastal kingdoms. These new royal centers, like Karangasem in the east, Badung in the south, Buleleng in the north, and Mengwi in the (south)west, derived most of their wealth and power from the increased slave trade in the archipelago. Scattered information indicates that thousands of Balinese were sold by their own lords to Dutch, Chinese, and Buginese sailors who brought them to Batavia and the Moluccas. Consequently, the restored Gelgel dynasty, now residing in Klungkung, was not able to exert much influence over the "nouveau riche" dynasties.[41] However, despite its reduced power

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[38] Schulte Nordholt, "Een Balische Dynastie," pp. 22–27. The episode in the *babad* describing the heroic death of the king's son, Gusti Agung Panji, which could easily be interpreted as a literary motif illustrating the ideal behavior of an exemplary hero, took place during one of these campaigns. According to a VOC report, Gusti Agung Panji was killed in 1713, as were two to three hundred of his followers; W. Ph. Coolhaas, ed., *Generale Missiven* vol. VII (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1979), pp. 54–55. This event is still commemorated by way of shrines in several temples in the Mengwi area.

[39] As I Wayan Reken, the late historian of Jembrana, once put it: "When a lord conquered a neighboring area, he not only confiscated the *sawah* and the women, but the history as well" (interview 1983).

[40] J. H. Plumb, *The Death of the Past* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1971), pp. 31–32.

[41] In letters to Batavia in 1693 and 1695 the Dewa Agung complained that his "former vassals" no longer obeyed him, and he asked the VOC for weapons and military support in order to "restore" his position; KITLV, Coll. H. J. de Graaf, H.1055, no. 8. On the slave trade, see A.J.S. Reid, ed., *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Southeast Asia* (St.Lucia: Univ.of Queensland Press, 1983), Schulte Nordholt, "Een Balische Dynastie," pp. 36–40.

Concerning the seaborne power of Panji Sakti, the *Babad Buleleng* tells about a certain Ki Empu Awang, whose ship, full of valuable cargo, is stranded on the Buleleng beach. Finally it was Panji Sakti who was strong enough to push the ship back into the sea with his *kris*. As a reward, Empu Awang gave Panji Sakti the cargo. "Henceforth Ki Gusti Panji possessed considerable wealth . . ." (Worsley, *Babad Buleleng*, p. 147). Worsley consid-

Klungkung still remained the center, commanding the highest esteem among the Balinese nobility since it was seen as the first heir of the Majapahit legacy in Bali.

Once a new constellation of old authority (Klungkung) and new coastal power centers had emerged, the situation needed a new conceptual framework.[42] It is in this context that one should evaluate one of the key texts of the Balinese nobility, the *Babad Dalem*. Although the date is difficult to determine, it is very likely that this text was composed shortly after 1700.[43] The *Babad Dalem* presents for the first time explicitly the Majapahit origin of the Balinese nobility, and places Gelgel—followed by Klungkung—at the apex of the hierarchical order. The text tells also how the other major power centers in Bali at the beginning of the eighteenth century "descended" from Gelgel. The *Babad Dalem* is not a nostalgic text that describes the lost history of Gelgel supremacy. On the contrary, it shows how, after a severe crisis, a new political order eventually emerged which fitted into the old hierarchical order. From the time the *Babad Dalem* was composed, it gradually became the basic text used by Balinese noble families to connect the Majapahit and Gelgel origin with their own genealogies. Most of the present-day genealogical narratives of the nobility actually include major parts of the *Babad Dalem*.[44]

Although it is speculative, I think that the first part of the *Babad Mengwi* which is summarized above may have been composed in the first part of the eighteenth century.[45] If this

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ers the Empu Awang episode as a typical literary motif without any historical relevance (ibid., pp. 222–23; see also Kumar, "On Variation," p. 243). I support, however, Pierre-Yves Manguin's thesis that the Empu Awang story underlines the vital relationship between overseas traders and the rulers of coastal kingdoms; P.-Y. Manguin, "The Merchant and the King. Political Myths of Southeast Asian Coastal Polities," *Indonesia* 52 (October 1991): 41–54. A reference concerning the identity of Empu Awang is to be found outside the text in the *Pura Segara Panimbangan*, the sea temple north of the *desa* Panji in Buleleng, which was (and still is) connected with the village temple of Panji, where Panji Sakti started his career. According to informants, Empu Awang is venerated in one of the shrines of the sea temple. Interestingly the shrine, called *Ratu Bungkah Kaan*, is decorated with an old relief which represents a Chinese (trader).

[42] See also Adrian Vickers, *Bali: A Paradise Created* (Ringwood: Penguin, 1989), pp. 40–41: "In the changing circumstances of the 1600s and 1700s, new images were needed to explain how a number of kings could exist in close proximity, and how kings could emerge virtually out of nowhere. . . . As the kingdoms consolidated, each of the families began to turn its attention to its origins and to try and locate itself in relation to the other royal dynasties."

[43] I would like to thank David Stuart-Fox with whom I have spent many hours discussing the nature and historical background of this *babad*. For a beautiful analysis of the *Babad Dalem* as the cultural basis of Klungkung's power, see Margaret Wiener, "Visible and Invisible Realms: The Royal House of Klungkung and the Dutch Conquest of Bali" (PhD dissertation, Department of Anthropology, University of Chicago, 1990), pp. 146–98. I am not convinced by Vickers' statement that this text was written for the first time in 1819 in the form of a poem (i.e., *Kidung Pamencangah*); Vickers, *Bali*, p. 69. First, it makes little sense to have waited a century to explain a political order which was established shortly after 1700, something Vickers seems to indicate himself (see above note 42); secondly, the narrative ends around 1700, which usually indicates that the text was written shortly afterwards. The re-composition of the *Babad Dalem* in the form of a poem in 1819 would correspond more or less with a general change in the position of the Balinese dynasties at the beginning of the nineteenthth century. Compared with the eighteenth century, dynasties tended to consolidate themselves and become more "inward looking"; cf. Schulte Nordholt, "Een Balische Dynastie," pp. 83–84, 114–15.

[44] In connection with the *Babad Dalem*, another genre of texts, the so-called Panji tales, performed in *Gambuh* theatre, became popular among the Balinese nobility. In these heroic-romantic stories, situated in Old Javanese kingdoms, the contemporary political situation in Bali was linked with the Javanese past, while themes like rivalry and warfare, and the rise of new power holders reflected the political reality of that time as well; Vickers, *Bali*, pp. 53–64.

[45] In the opening lines of the *Babad Mengwi* it is stated that Sri Aji Agung Gede, the ruler of Klungkung, gave a *babad* to the king of Mengwi, in which the origin of the descendants of the kings of Gelgel and Klungkung and those of Arya Kepakisan is explained. My guess is that, if the first part of the *babad* was indeed written in the first

is the case both the *Babad Dalem* and the *Babad Mengwi* made it possible for the Mengwi dynasty to explain its origin and confirm its claim to power by referring to a genealogical link with Gelgel and Majapahit.

A second and even more speculative remark concerns the relationship between Mengwi and Klungkung.[46] The Klungkung court could prove its superior authority—despite its weakness in terms of power—because in the new conceptualization the powerful king of Mengwi had become the *patih* of Klungkung, as if nothing had changed since the days of Gelgel. The "reconstruction" of the ruler-*patih* relationship under totally new conditions may reflect the principle of recurrent patterns which was formulated by Berg with regard to early Javanese historiography.[47] New relationships could only be explained in terms of earlier relationships. Consequently, the present formed a logical outcome of the past if certain patterns were repeated, as a result of which past and present had become basically identical.

The effort to bring the past and the present together was not purely a matter of texts, since it was accompanied by a remarkable event which illustrates the extent to which the idea of the Majapahit origin of the Balinese political order was translated into social action. According to a VOC report from 1730, the (second) king of Mengwi had organized a large expedition *cum* pilgrimage to East Java in 1729/30. Accompanied by the kings of Tabanan and Klungkung, he had made a deliberate attempt to conquer and restore the site where the capital of Majapahit had once stood, near the village of Wirasaba. According to the report, the king of Mengwi wanted to control this place, "which had once belonged to his ancestors, being of the opinion to restore again the ruined place and make it into a splendid *negorije* as it formerly had been."[48]

The ambitious campaign failed since the troops were harassed by illness. Moreover, the kings of Tabanan and Mengwi were suddenly challenged by attacks and revolts in Bali, and had to return quickly to restore their authority personally.[49]

Despite the fact that the Balinese kings never reached Wirasaba, they did reach Majapahit in an imaginary or ideological way, by tracing their descent in an unbroken line

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half of the eighteenth century, it must have been shortly after 1733, when a decisive battle in Banjar Ambengan in North Bali was won by the second king of Mengwi, after which he returned to Mengwi. Stories of the war between Buleleng and Mengwi in both the *Babad Buleleng* and the *Babad Mengwi* were probably based on the battle of 1733; Schulte Nordholt, "Een Balische Dynastie," pp. 23–31.

[46] Speculative because the reconciliation between the rulers of Mengwi and Klungkung is described in the second part of the *Babad Mengwi* which was composed in the 1920s, although it may have been oral tradition before that.

[47] See note 8.

[48] ARA, VOC archives no. 2169: report by W. Tersmitten, Semarang 6-3-1730. About a century earlier Sultan Agung of Mataram had overrun Wirasaba as well, and his motive, too, was to enhance his authority; Ricklefs, *History of Modern Indonesia*, p. 40.

[49] The *Babad Tabanan* (Denpasar: Parisada Hindu Dharma, 1974), pp. 56–57, is, as far as I know, the only Balinese source which refers to this incident. Although the campaign to restore Majapahit failed, the pilgrims did something else to demonstrate their East Javanese "roots." The same VOC report in which the quest for Majapahit is mentioned, informs us about a large (*abhiseka ratu*) ritual on the slopes of Mount Smeru in 1729, where a Hindu-Javanese sanctuary was situated. During the ritual the second king of Mengwi received the title *Pangeran Purbanegara* (Lord of the Old Land) "from the great heathen priest Aria Smeroe . . . ," an event witnessed by the kings of Tabanan and Klungkung. Mount Smeru was, according to Balinese stories, a "descendent" from Mount Mahameru, while the Gunung Agung in Bali and Gunung Rinjani in Lombok "descended" from Mt. Smeru. This pilgrimage is not explicitly mentioned in Balinese sources; only a version of the *Babad Dalem* (I Wayan Warna, *Babad Dalem*, p. 114) refers briefly to the fact that the Dewa Agung visited "Tuan Smeru." The king of Mengwi also received a *kris* from the priest of Mt. Meru with which he fought the battle in North Bali in 1733.

through Gelgel to this glorious past, while at the same time actual political relationships could be explained in similar terms. For, "authority once achieved must have a secure and usable past."[50]

Origin and descent were not only means to create, explain, and commemorate relationships among the Balinese nobility as such. They were also the organizing principles within the *negara* Mengwi, and here we touch upon the third theme.

The political structure of Mengwi was to a large extent a patrimonial system in which control was exercised through the expanded household of the king; that is to say, the network of relationships was conceptualized in kinship terms. Around the king there were about twenty greater and lesser lords, who were in command of their own domains, or satellites. According to the *Babad Mengwi*, half of these regional or local lords were also leaders of lineages of the royal kingroup, whose ancestors were the sons of the first king of Mengwi. There is, however, reason to doubt whether all these "sub-ancestors" were really sons of the first king. Some were obviously not (since there were two founding kings instead of one); others were actually adopted from other noble families, while some of the sons mentioned in VOC reports cannot be found in the Mengwi genealogy. Thus, the picture which is presented by the *babad* is much simpler than the actual complexity of that period. This simplification may have served a practical goal. The *babad* sketches a clear "genealogical umbrella," with one "father-king" at the top, who represents the core-line of the dynasty, and a number of "son-lords" representing the royal lineages *cum* satellites. This umbrella provided the basic model for the internal ranking order of the royal kingroup. Descendants from older sons were held in higher esteem than those descending from younger sons. Moreover, each lineage had, according to the same principle of "sinking status," its own internal ranking order.[51] The relationships between and within lineages were therefore, at least ideally, based on the principles of origin and descent.

These principles were, however, not restricted to the royal kingroup. If we put them within the wider context of the *negara*, it appears that a large number of other families were incorporated in a wider genealogical framework. Besides the royal kingroup, there existed a large number of lower noble families belonging to the entourage of the king. It is interesting to see that many of these families trace their origin back to lower (sub-)lineages of the large classificatory kingroup of which Arya Kepakisan was the ultimate ancestor. Consequently, there existed a much broader genealogical umbrella, with Arya Kepakisan at the top and in which the Mengwi dynasty formed the core line, while the follower-families represented lower (sub-)lineages. As such this enlarged genealogical scheme provided an opportunity to incorporate followers—including, for instance, the Gusi's Celuk—in the lower echelons of the same ranking order.

Among the trusted followers of the king there was one particular group of people called "the sons of the king." This group formed the core of the army, and all of its brave and loyal members were adopted by the king. They were detached from their own kingroups and fused into a new one which was tied to the king. As a manifestation of their new identity and privileged position, the "sons of the king" received a new *kawitan* within the temple Taman Ayun.[52]

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[50] Plumb, *Death of the Past*, p. 41.

[51] See Hildred Geertz & Clifford Geertz, *Kinship in Bali* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), pp. 124–31.

[52] This *kawitan* happened to be the shrine dedicated to the memory of the *Pasek* Buduk who could not be defeated by the king of Mengwi.

The larger genealogical umbrella incorporated most of the members of the royal entourage, but it did not include everybody. Some noble families managed to maintain their "genealogical autonomy," hence their own ancestor. They were the ones with considerable regional power who could not be subjugated by the king. Although they were not incorporated within the Arya Kepakisan kingroup, they were depicted as "younger brothers" of the king, with whom marriage alliances were maintained.[53]

The Brahmans formed a group that could never be incorporated by the dynasty. The relationship between king and Brahman priest was nevertheless sometimes conceptualized in kinship terms: the priest was seen as the "older brother" of the king.[54]

All these relationships, without which the *negara* would fall apart, are mapped in the *Babad Mengwi*, and, seen within a wider context, repeated in a large number of genealogical narratives of families who were part of the royal hierarchy. As such the *babad* was not meant to provide a reconstruction of Mengwi history. It was primarily a political document in which order was created through a reorganization of the past in terms of origin and descent; the *babad* formed part of the construction of the *negara*.

Kidung Nderet: Forgotten Loyalties and Destruction

I will now leave the *babad* for a while and turn to another genre of texts: the "songs of destruction," or *uwug*, in particular the *Kidung Nderet*.[55] This song is part of a much larger genre of poems, or *gaguritan*, which include for instance *Basur, Bagus Diarsa, Brayut*, and *Jayaprana*.[56] The stories told in these poems are located in the world of commoners and elaborate on moral issues in the relationship between villagers and those in power. With regard to the *uwug* texts, I will address a general remark made by Vickers that the emergence of the *gaguritan* as a genre reflects a growing tension between nobility and commoners in nineteenth-century Bali.[57]

As far as we know at this moment, the majority of the *uwug* texts appeared shortly after 1850. Some of them describe the military confrontations with the Dutch, often in combination with internal conflicts, while others concentrate on internal wars.[58] It is not unreason-

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[53] The lords of Kaba-Kaba never surrendered to the king and kept, as descendants from Arya Belog, their own genealogical identity.

[54] Worsley, *Babad Buleleng*, p. 155; cf Wiener, *Visible and Invisible Realms*, pp. 157–58. In the *Babad Mengwi*, however, the priest is seen as the "teacher" of the king.

[55] U. B. Leiden, Or.15.102 (other copies: Or.13.060, 9333). The version I use here was discovered by I G. Ng. Ketut Sangka, and was probably transcribed from an earlier version by his father in 1933. I have made use of a translation by Hedi Hinzler.

[56] C. Hooykaas, *Tjalon Arang: volksverhalen en legenden van Bali* (Amsterdam: Meulenhoff, 1979).

[57] Vickers, *Bali*, p. 72–73.

[58] See, for instance, the *Rusak Buleleng;* Singaraja, Gedong Kirtya, no. 1035; I Made Gosong, *Geguritan Rusak Buleleng* (Denpasar: Universitas Udayana/P. & K., 1980) on the war between Buleleng and the Dutch in 1846–1849; the *Bhuwana Winasa* (KITLV, Coll. Korn, Or.435, no. 270) on the warfare in South Bali during the 1880s and 1890s, followed by the Dutch military expeditions in 1906–1908. Texts on internal conflicts include for instance the *Dé Gunati* (Coll. Hinzler) on a war in Taman Bali, the *Uwug Kengetan* (in Ida Bagus Mayun, ed., *Ceritera Rakyat Daerah Bali* (Denpasar: P. & K., 1979), pp. 37–48), the *Geguritan Rereg Gianyar*, ed. Ida Bagus Sidemen (Jakarta: P. & K., 1980). Not all of the new *uwug* texts deal exclusively with conflicts, war, and destruction. See, for instance, the *Gaguritan Padem Warak* which describes a post-cremation ritual (*maligya)* in Klungkung in 1842 (A. Vickers, "Ritual Written: The Song of the Ligya, or the Killing of the Rhinoceros," in *State and Society in Bali*, ed. Hildred Geertz, pp. 85–136); see also the "historical novel" *Gaguritan Tjokor I Ratoe* (Coll. Museum Bali, Denpasar).

able to suppose that there was a direct relationship between the increasing pressure from the Dutch colonial state on Bali during the second half of the nineteenth century, which intensified internal warfare, and the emergence of the *uwug* in which these developments were in a way evaluated. There may have been an awareness among Balinese leaders that they were threatened by new external dangers which not only caused considerable internal tensions but were also beyond their control.[59] The awareness of this problem may have led Balinese writers to create the *uwug* in order to record and interpret the crisis with which they were confronted. Although the crisis which is described and analyzed in the *Kidung Nderet* occurred in the first half of the nineteenth century, I think that the major themes fit very well within the atmosphere of the late nineteenth century when the poem was composed.[60]

In this respect, Vickers has made a valuable suggestion as to why *uwug* texts were written in the form of a *gaguritan*. He argues that the *gaguritan* is concerned with emotion and crisis. In particular, this genre contains a discourse of emotion in which happiness and confusion as mental states feature most prominently, while forgetting and confusion are clearly part of the same moral problem.[61] Taking this argument as a point of departure, I will not concentrate on "mental states" as such but try to elaborate the aspects of confusion and forgetting within the wider context of nineteenth-century Balinese politics.

The *Kidung Nderet* is a beautiful song about a major crisis in Mengwi history. The text gives a lively picture of Balinese politics around 1820, and provides valuable information about the relationships between kings and lords, and between lords and followers, about irrigation, taxation, and trade, about intrigues, strategies, misunderstandings, and the chaos of warfare; but above all about the nature of leadership. In the *kidung* all these issues are intertwined and put into motion. The text reflects the complexities as well as the logic of political processes in nineteenth-century Bali. I will argue that the main theme of the text concerns loyalty, which formed the backbone as well as the Achilles heel of Balinese politics. When old bonds of loyalty were forgotten and leadership proved to be weak, continuity and order were gone. Instead confusion prevailed and princes and peasants faced the threat of destruction.

Here follows a summary of the *Kidung Nderet*:

> Under the rule of Cokorda Munggu [the third king of Mengwi who ruled in the second part of the eighteenth century] Mengwi prospered. After his death, his widow Sayu Oka was in power, but when she grew old things went wrong. Her son, Gusti Agung Putu Agung, is now king of Mengwi. He is weak, and the Kaliyuga [time of confusion] is near.

[Mengwi had already lost its influence in Blambangan, Buleleng, Badung, and Jembrana.]

> The old entourage of followers, who had proven their loyalty on the battlefield, was replaced by new and inexperienced favorites of the king. One of them is Sagung Nderet, a refugee from Kramas, who has become the leading figure in the royal center. He supervises the collection of taxes. He doubled the taxes, does not allow delays of payment, demanding that everybody pay in cash. He also levies taxes on trade, cash crops, and pigs and has a virtual monopoly on the sale of opium.

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[59] For a summary of these developments, see Schulte Nordholt, "Een Balische Dynastie," pp. 151–204.

[60] The authorship and possible reason why this *kidung* was created will be discussed below.

[61] Vickers, "Ritual Written."

As *major domus* Sagung Nderet takes good care of himself and has become a rich man. He is jealous of Made Tibung, who controls a large number of people and *sawah* fields south of Mengwi in the area of Padangluah and who was allowed to keep the taxes for himself.

Sagung Nderet convinces the king to withdraw the privileges granted to Made Tibung, and now he has to pay tax. Made Tibung considers the decision of the king to be unjust. "Has the lord forgotten the grant of the old days?" He knows that Sagung Nderet is behind this action. Although he is only a refugee without a firm power base in Mengwi, Nderet is respected because he has direct access to the king. Made Tibung goes to Sibang to complain about his situation. But lord Kamasan [leader of the powerful royal lineage *cum* satellite of Sibang] cannot help him. "Yes, when they are in trouble in Mengwi I am the second in rank, but when all goes well I have to clear off."

In Mengwi there is, however, a man who is brave enough to inform the king about the negative effects of Sagung Nderet's policy. That is I Kemoning, an old servant. He tells the king that people outside the *puri* complain about the greediness of Sagung Nderet. I Kemoning warns the king not to listen to Sagung Nderet, for it is wrong to replace old and loyal followers. "This will be the end of Mengwi." He reminds the king of the old days, when Badung tried to conquer the *sawah* of Padangluah on a day when the people of Padangluah went out in order to repair the dam Gumasih. When the news of the attack reached Mengwi the alarm blocks were beaten, and queen Sayu Oka came out of the *puri*. She wept and asked her followers what to do. The brave men promised her to fight, and seated on a palanquin she went with them. The people of Padangluah were glad that the army of Mengwi came to rescue them. Together they fought against the invaders, and in the darkness of the night the troops from Badung were forced to flee in complete chaos. Those were the good old days. The king does not know what to say; he is embarrassed.

A certain I Linggar overhears I Kemoning's story and goes to Sagung Nderet. Together they smoke opium from a pipe decorated with gold. Nderet decides to ask the king's permission to kill the old servant. And again the king listens to Sagung Nderet and agrees to his plan. Later that night I Kemoning is arrested and taken to the cremation place. I Kemoning knows in advance that he is going to be killed, but he does not want to betray his loyalty to the old king [Cokorda Munggu]. He is dressed in beautiful clothes and wants to dance once more a scene from the Gambuh: the landing in Tuban, in which he honors the king of Gegelang.

This last request is granted. Then he is stabbed in the back and dies.

Meanwhile the people of Padangluah are in trouble. Their irrigation water does not flow any longer from dam Gumasih to their *sawah*. Due to neglect by Sagung Nderet the dam has broken down and during the next five years the *sawah* are dry.

The people from Padangluah go to the *jero* [noble house] of Made Tibung and complain about their situation. What are Made Tibung's plans, why does lord Kamasan of Sibang not help him? Why does no-one try to kill Sagung Nderet?

Made Tibung decides to go to Mengwi in order to ask the king to respect the old privileges and to send Nderet away.

Accompanied by his men, Made Tibung leaves Padangluah, but when they arrive in Mengwi the place is deserted. The king does not appear, pretending to be ill. Finally the

people of Padangluah return to their homes. They are angry. Made Tibung says: "Now the time has come that Mengwi will be vanquished." Gianyar, Badung, and Tabanan are all enemies of Mengwi and willing to attack.

Made Tibung sends a messenger to Den Pasar to ask for help and to offer his loyalty to the king of Badung. The king accepts the offer and promises to help Padangluah.

However, one of the old and experienced lords of Badung, Agung Kaleran, hesitates. Suppose this is a trick and Sagung Nderet is behind it. Perhaps we will be ambushed as soon as we enter Padangluah. The king answers that he has already given his word to Made Tibung; he has to keep his promise.

No problem, says Agung Kaleran. In Badung there is a group of worthless people: Buginese [from the trading communities in south Badung]. Five hundred Buginese will go in front, followed by troops from Badung. If the Buginese are killed, bad luck; if they win, Badung will take over the area of Padangluah.

The Buginese men are mobilized and given *genje amuk*[62] which has an immediate effect: they scream, dance, and consider everybody who comes near as the enemy. More or less in trance, they run to the north, to Padangluah.

Meanwhile the people of Padangluah are waiting for their allies from Badung. Towards the end of the day a bunch of wild-eyed Buginese fall upon them, attacking without a moment's hesitation. The leaders of Padangluah try to defend themselves while the panicked population flees in all directions. Made Tibung dies. Utter chaos prevails when dusk sets in and friend cannot be distinguished from foe.

Confusion and panic peak during the night. When the Buginese return home from the bloodshed they have inflicted, they run into the Gusti from Badung with their troops. Surprised by this new "resistance" they run forward, while the people from Badung are convinced that they have marched into a Mengwi trap...

Dawn at last brings to light who has been slaying whom. The bodies are buried in a large pit, and one of the Badung leaders laments the death of so many Buginese: his income [from trade] is now much reduced. But the benefits are clear: "Don't worry, let us look for taxes in Mengwi."

Shocked by the sudden invasion, unable to mobilize troops, and left alone by its major satellites, the royal center of Mengwi is paralyzed. Badung conquers the area of Padangluah, Tabanan attacks from the west, Payangan and Gianyar attack the eastern satellite of Kengetan and the lineage of Sayan. Dead bodies are not buried and soon an epidemic causes even more panic; food is extremely expensive.

Those who are still alive flee to Mengwi; among them is one of the leaders of Kengetan. Although he is a coward, he is sent north to Sembung, where he has to defend the northern part of Mengwi against attacks from yet another enemy, namely Marga. Perhaps the new leader of Sembung can attack Marga. . . . [here the story ends]

The contrasts with the *babad* are obvious. The *kidung* is not primarily concerned with matters like origin or descent; it has no genealogical framework, and does not refer to a distant past;

[62] Probably cannabis. According to Anthony Reid, "Opium or cannabis was often used to inspire . . . a warrior to defy death," A.J.S. Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce 1450–1680. Vol. I: The Lands below the Winds* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), p. 125. During the Dutch military campaign against Jagaraga in 1848, Buginese and Balinese soldiers used opium; Schulte Nordholt, "Een Balische Dynastie," p. 158.

it is not a "*negara*-building" text.[63] The only reference to the past consists of a "flashback," in which I Kemoning reminds the king of the good old days when leaders took care of their people, promises were kept, and bonds of loyalty withstood the threat of disorder. Towards the end of the story, the contrast between the old days and the present chaos is emphasized when the war with Badung is lost.

The story focuses on a specific sequence of events which is narrated in chronological order. It presents the precise minutes of a process of decline, forgetting, loss of confidence, confusion, misunderstanding, treason, chaos, and defeat. The logic of this chain of causes and effects is emphasized through a well-balanced composition of extremely realistic scenes which must have been very familiar to nineteenth-century Balinese. The *kidung* reads like a modern filmscript in which the story is enacted by a few key characters in different places, as a result of which we see the unfolding of the drama from various, but related perspectives.

Whereas the characters of the *babad* lack any personality, since they represent basically ideal types,[64] the leading figures in the *kidung* are, in the first place, individual human beings who try, refuse, or simply fail to live up to their (political) responsibilities. Within its genre, the *kidung* does indeed elaborate human emotions in terms of anger, honor, fear, and so on.

De Graaf would have liked this story for its realism and would have used it without further modifications. In that case the moral dimension of the story, which is enacted by the main characters, would have been neglected. Whereas the *babad* creates a story about origin and descent in order to make it real, the *kidung* uses reality in order to discuss the moral problems which have to do with leadership and loyalty. The realistic nature of the story makes the moral issues raised virtually inescapable: this is not just a story in which ideal models are enacted; it is real and imminent, and so are the issues.

In order to illustrate to what extent these moral issues are wrapped in reality, I will compare the story with information from other sources.[65] The crisis which is evoked in the *kidung* took place between ±1820 and 1823, and the leading characters of the *kidung* are, as far as I know, based upon historical persons. There are no indications that certain figures, or even scenes, were invented for the sake of the story.

Sayu Oka was the primary wife, or *padmi*, of Cokorda Munggu and dominated Mengwi after his death as queen-dowager. She came from Kaba-Kaba, and her power was not only based upon an alliance with her home *puri* but also on *sawah* and followers under her personal control. The king, I Gusti Agung Putu Agung, was probably a grandson of Sayu Oka. As the son of a secondary wife, or *selir*, he was later adopted by a *padmi* of his father in order to raise his status and to become king.[66] Pierre Dubois reports about this king that he was indeed a rather weak person. His most humiliating experience occurred in 1823. When

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[63] The text refers explicitly to this last point by stating in the opening lines, that it is "not a Malat," i.e., one of the most famous Panji romances, which formed, together with the *babad*, the textual building blocks of the *negara*. I am indebted to Peter Worsley for drawing my attention to this.

[64] Cf. Worsley, *Babad Buleleng*.

[65] These include *babad*, genealogies, interview material, and Dutch reports; for more details, see Schulte Nordholt, "Een Balische Dynastie," pp. 73–101.

[66] In fact a series of very complicated successions accompanied by adoptions at the beginning of the nineteenth century in Mengwi, changes of names, and the repetition of the same name in successive generations make it difficult to distinguish which G. Agung Putu Agung is actually meant here.

Mengwi was invaded from all sides he had to surrender to the king of Badung, Gusti Ngurah Made Pamecutan (*puri* Den Pasar, 1817–1828).[67]

Agung Kamasan was the leader of *puri* Sibang at that time. There were a lot of Agung Kamasan, but an interesting detail is that Agung Kamasan says to Made Tibung that he has no sons. The genealogy of *puri* Sibang mentions a leader who had no sons who lived around 1820.

With respect to the trusted followers of the old order who were replaced by new favorites, it is possible to identify at least some of them. They belong to families whose leaders had accompanied the second king of Mengwi during his campaigns to East Java and were rewarded with privileged positions in Mengwi.

It is possible to identify Made Tibung, or, according to his descendants, *Gusti* Made Tibung. He was a descendant of an *anak astra*—a boy conceived by a commoner woman and recognized by the noble father—of Cokorda Munggu, who had given the area of Padangluah to his son. Made Tibung's descendants live in Dalung and were willing to show me their *babad* in which a part of the story is told from their point of view.[68] This *babad*, together with a lot of interview material, made clear that around 1820 the leader of Padangluah, who lived in *jero* Tibubeneng, was killed in a war with Badung. Local stories, moreover, reveal that the conflict described in the *kidung* was in fact much more complicated, since there was also an internal feud between the two lineages of local power holders in Padangluah. One faction led by Made Tibung offered its loyalty to Badung, whereas the other faction remained loyal to Mengwi. This information strongly suggests that the conflict of 1823 actually consisted of overlapping arenas in which at least three conflicts tended to reinforce each other: the first was between the two local factions, the second between Made Tibung and Sagung Nderet, and the third between Mengwi and Badung.

Finally, Sagung Nderet could more or less be identified as well. According to genealogies found in Kramas and the Mengwi area, the house of Kramas in Gianyar was defeated by the emerging dynasty of Dewa Manggis towards the end of the eighteenth century. Part of the Kramas family took refuge in Mengwi and were given a house in the ward Alangkajeng of the village, most of whose inhabitants belonged to the entourage of the royal *puri*.[69] Like Made Tibung, Sagung Nderet is not remembered under that name, nor did anybody know a story about a *major domus* who was involved in a conflict with Padangluah. The genealogy of the descendants of the family from Kramas does, however, indicate a intimate relationship between the royal kingroup and the newly arrived refugees: a boy from the Kramas family was adopted by the emerging royal lineage of Mayun.[70] Whatever

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[67] Letters by P. Dubois (1830), KITLV H.281.

[68] I.e., the *Babad Meliling*, U.B. Leiden, Or.16.902. When I learned about the existence of the *Kidung Nderet* during my fieldwork in 1983, I showed a copy of the text to several informants in Mengwi, Pererenan, and Dalung/Gaji (i.e., formerly Padangluah). To my surprise no one knew this text, nor had anybody ever heard about Sagung Nderet. On the other hand, many people knew stories about the war(s) between Badung and Mengwi. The problem was, however, that stories about wars in 1780, 1810, 1823, and 1885–1891 were easily mixed up, so that it was not clear (which fragment of) which story had to do with the war of 1823.

[69] In Kramas the family had had the title *Gusti Agung*, but after the arrival of the refugees in Mengwi, they were degraded to the level of *Si Agung (=Sagung)*.

[70] His name was Sagung (or as the genalogy now says: I Gusti Agung Made Kajeng; genealogy *Jero* Kramas, Mengwi). Interview with I G. Ag. Megayasa, *Jero* Tangeb, Tangeb 1989. The king of Mengwi belonged to another royal lineage. The adoption is not mentioned in the genealogies of the Mengwi dynasty, but many adoptions were ignored. Moreover, it is not clear what adoption actually may have meant. Perhaps the boy from Kramas became a kind of *parekan*/favorite of the leader of the lineage of Mayun.

the precise nature of this adoption, it is possible that the boy was Nderet and that he started his career from within the royal entourage.

So far, this evidence about the main characters and events is circumstantial. The *kidung* also provides rather unique "referential information" about the Balinese *negara*. I will discuss a few aspects.

The first concerns the nature of leadership, and the relationships between center and satellites and between leaders and followers. Reading the *kidung*, it becomes evident that the political system in nineteenth-century Bali depended to a large extent on the public manifestation of leadership. This is seen, for instance, in the sharp contrast between the active role played by Queen Sayu Oka in the "flashback" and the passive attitude of the king when Made Tibung went to see him in Mengwi. The queen, together with her trusted followers, went to rescue the people of Padangluah, but when the people from Padangluah wanted to ask the king for justice, he pretended to be ill. He was invisible, hiding himself behind the walls of his *puri*. Whether the weak and invisible king tried to live up to another role, that of an icon or ritual object,[71] is not mentioned in the *kidung*. Although public rituals were extremely important in order to enact the *negara*, the enactment required at least a group of people who believed that it was worthwhile making the authority of their king manifest. Under the conditions which prevailed in Mengwi in the early 1820s, it was obvious that the staging of rituals was impossible and even irrelevant.

One of the negative judgments about Sagung Nderet in the *kidung* concerns the fact that his position in Mengwi is not based upon a substantial following. He has, in other words, not demonstrated that he deserves to be an influential leader. His power is, instead, based purely on the fact that he has access to the king, and that he, the outsider, has appropriated the king's voice.

On another level, the role of Made Tibung, caught between the "forgotten" royal privileges and the material interests of his own men, illustrates the difficult position of local leaders. His decision to forget about his loyalty to the invisible king and to turn to Badung for help is not condemned in the *kidung*. On the contrary, it is seen as the logical result of the king's inactivity. His tragedy, however, lies in being cheated by the lords of Badung, who were not at all interested in his problems. None of them bothered about his death; they were just after the money.

The lord of Sibang represents another kind of local leader. He does not want to get involved, despite his sympathy for Made Tibung and his aversion to the royal *puri*. Agung Kamasan's cynical attitude towards Mengwi summarizes nicely the very uneasy relationship between the royal center and one of its main satellites which emerges also from other sources. The passive attitude of Agung Kamasan differs from the irresoluteness of the king, because Agung Kamasan's interest, first and foremost, is to protect his own domain. He succeeds, for while Padangluah is ruined, Sibang stays out of the war.

A second point concerns the information about irrigation in connection with trade and taxation. It is possible to locate dam Gumasih just north of *desa* Mambal; a small temple near the river Ayung is called *pura* Gumasih, while one of the wards of Mambal has the same name. The reason Made Tibung came to see Agung Kamasan was that at that time the dam Gumasih was located within the domain of *puri* Sibang.

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[71] Geertz, *Negara*.

The *kidung* makes clear that irrigation in nineteenth-century Bali was not just a local affair. Local irrigation was often part of a larger system which depended on a central water supply, for which higher levels of (noble) authority were responsible. Without noble protection at this level, there was no water at all. As long as Made Tibung was not required to pay taxes to the king he was able to maintain the dam and the conduits himself. When, however, Made Tibung was obliged to pay the king taxes, Sagung Nderet became responsible for the irrigation system in his capacity as *major domus*, but he ignored his responsibilities.[72] Irrigation, in other words, did not form a separate domain which belonged to the world of villagers, as Clifford Geertz seems to suggest,[73] but consisted of several interconnected levels, as a result of which the interests of *puri* and peasants were often intertwined.

There are reasons to suppose that fertile *sawah* fields in South Bali became a bone of contention at the beginning of the nineteenth century. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the slave trade (and from the middle of the eighteenth century onwards, opium) had formed the major source of income for the Balinese nobility. Due to changes in trade patterns in the archipelago, as well as the gradual abolishment of slavery, Balinese power holders had to look for other ways to obtain wealth. They proved to be flexible and perceptive, because within a few years slaves were replaced by other export items: large quantities of rice, "second (cash) crops," and pigs which were exported by Chinese, Buginese, and a few European traders to Java, Singapore, and China.[74]

"Money is the nerve of power," wrote Dubois in 1830 in one of his letters on trade and politics in South Bali.[75] The *kidung* illustrates that, as a consequence of the changes in the external trade, rivalry among the South Balinese nobility extended, more than before, to control of the fertile *sawah* areas and eventually irrigation systems.

The *kidung* also provides some information about taxation. Sagung Nderet not only tried to increase the taxation on rice fields, but he also ordered the peasants to pay in cash. He introduced, moreover, new taxes on second crops and pigs, while he tried to monopolize the opium trade as well.

In addition to providing valuable "factual" information, the *kidung* also offers a very perceptive analysis of the dynamics of the nineteenth-century *negara*. Different aspects of the political system are brought together in a coherent framework. In order to understand this analysis I will now turn to the moral nature of the story.

It is obvious that that the *kidung* depicts Sagung Nderet in a very negative way. He is pictured as a selfish person exclusively out to line his own pockets, and his behavior is seen as one of the main sources of instability and chaos. A different reading of the text can, however, lead to an alternative judgement. The overall economic changes in the archipelago during the first decades of the nineteenth century greatly affected Balinese exports, and put

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[72] With regard to the damage done to the central water supply as a result of which the *sawah* in Padangluah fell dry, I found an interesting story in the *desa* Gerih, near Mambal. Oral tradition has it that the main tunnel leading the water south from dam Gumasih once collapsed. Right at that spot stood a temple of the clan of *Bendesa* Gerih, which went down when the tunnel caved in. Such an accident would have created an additional complication, because, in order to repair damage done to a tunnel, outside specialists had to be contracted, but Made Tibung had no money to pay them.

[73] Geertz, *Negara*, pp. 68–86.

[74] See H. Schulte Nordholt, "The Mads Lange Connection. A Danish Trader in Bali in the Middle of the Nineteenth Century: Broker and Buffer," *Indonesia* 32 (October 1981): 17–47; "Een Balische Dynastie," pp. 88–91.

[75] P. Dubois, KITLV, H.281.

a stamp on local politics. From the available data, one gains the impression that the nobility played an active role in the transition from the slave trade to the export trade in agricultural products. There is no evidence that anything like a separate export—or "plantation"—sector came into existence. This implies that powerful *puri* sought to derive export surplus from their own domains by means of raising production and taxes. Further, royal centers made attempts to increase their control over the mercantile activities in their satellites. In this context, Sagung Nderet could be evaluated as a man attuned to the shifting times. Perhaps he was aware that his royal center should make an effort to increase its control over the changing market and fertile *sawah* fields. Maybe he was a tough and loyal "royal manager" who tried to impose central control on a booming economy. As a result, the Mengwi dynasty penetrated deeper into local society than before, and this, in turn, led to opposition. Probably Sagung Nderet's reputation as a scoundrel rests primarily on his inadequate authority. In people's minds he remained a foreigner who fled from Kramas, a coward and an undeserving favorite of the king. Moreover, the old and trusted entourage of the king who were pushed aside now stood on the sidelines, watching Sagung Nderet amass his fortune. In particular, the conflict between Sagung Nderet, the "manager," and Made Tibung, the representative of the old order in which privileges tended to fragment the system, is illustrative of attempts by the center to monopolize taxes and trade.

The outcome of these conflicts made clear that the center's bid failed. This was partly due to the weak central authority. More important was the fact that the royal center simply lacked the means to establish centralization effectively. Eventually Sagung Nderet achieved the very opposite of what he intended, for, rather than attaining control, the center lost its grip on the *negara* when the crisis reached a climax after 1820.

It was the fragmented nature of the political system that prevented the *negara* from becoming something that vaguely resembled a state. Instead, the *negara* displayed its characteristic pendulum movement: one driving force was the ambition to found a realm with royal grandeur, but, time and again, this ideal collided with an obstinate praxis in which the forces of fragmentation continued to reduce the king to the level of a chief, or baronet. It is within this context that one should understand the moral issue presented in the *kidung*.

The disruptive forces causing confusion and disaster come from the outside. The opening lines of the *kidung* announce the *Kaliyuga*, the time of confusion which will lead to *Pralaya*, the time of destruction. Like a natural disaster, such a process—whether or not inspired by divine will—is beyond human control, and morally neutral. But the next step is that this notion of fate is embodied in human beings and is realized in social action. Here again the main characters are outsiders. One of these is Sayu Oka, who is in two respects an outsider. In the first place, she does not belong to the Mengwi dynasty since she is from the house of Kaba-Kaba; secondly she is a woman. Although Sayu Oka was a powerful queen—in fact a large part of South Bali was ruled by women at the beginning of the nineteenth century—several sources depict such powerful women in negative terms, because female rulers were totally unpredictable. When Badung invaded Padangluah for the first time, Sayu Oka wept and was close to a nervous breakdown, but thanks to the loyal support of the old entourage—which actually belonged to her husband—she resumed the (male) role of the leader and the invaders were beaten. Two other version of the *Babad Mengwi* offer a much more negative judgement about Sayu Oka. One states bluntly that under her rule the *Kaliyuga* came over Mengwi and that Sayu Oka personified this evil. The second text relates

that she fell in love with Dewa Manggis of Gianyar, who was said to be an excellent *Gambuh* dancer. As a result she was no longer in control of herself and her *negara*.[76]

Besides Sayu Oka, Sagung Nderet was the second outsider who bred evil in the center of Mengwi authority. Nderet's role is contrasted with that of two other characters: I Kemoning and Made Tibung. The death of I Kemoning represents nothing more than a deliberate assault on the old order. I Kemoning was innocent and prepared to risk his life in order to warn the king against Nderet. He was the ideal loyal follower: even the very moment before his death he paid homage to his king. Whereas I Kemoning was an old man who had only a moral point to defend, Made Tibung was an active leader who had material interests and followers to look after. His position was based on old privileges on which he had built his career. When these privileges were withdrawn, and the royal center ignored its responsibility to take care of a decent supply of water, with the king refusing to see him, Made Tibung had no other choice but to turn to Badung in order to serve the interests of his own people.

Badung can be seen to be another external force threatening Mengwi. Badung's invasion is, however, not seen as a source of evil, but as a normal consequence of the confusion and neglect prevailing in Mengwi. The cold calculations of the lords of Badung are reported in neutral terms. They would have been fools if they had missed this opportunity. Warfare, at least in this case, was not a semi-ritual display of prestige, but consisted of tricks and treason and inflicted death and disease. For the leaders of Badung, the loss of a couple of Buginese, after moments of uncertainty, was compensated by the acquisition of large tracts of fertile land.

Despite its emphasis on outsiders, the *kidung* does not conceal the fact that the main weakness rested in the very center of the Mengwi dynasty. The final judgment concerns the king. He was the one who authorized Sagung Nderet's decisions; he forgot the privileges of the old followers, and knew very well that he had done so!

One of the central themes of the *kidung* is that the *negara* rested in the very first place on personal bonds of loyalty between the leader, followers, and satellites. In order to be maintained, these relationships had to be remembered, and commemorated, in texts, in temples, on the battlefield, and in rituals. Underlying the ritual enactment of the *negara* was a complex and hierarchical network of loyalties which had to be preserved and reinforced by visible leaders who were to be trusted. Perhaps the most important political activity of these leaders was to remember. The moral lesson of the *kidung* is that it shows what happens if a leader starts to forget: the *negara* simply falls apart.[77] Remembrance formed one of the basic "institutions" of the nineteenth-century *negara*.

Does the *kidung* reveal a commoner perspective, and is the text written by a commoner, as Vickers argues with respect to other *gaguritan*? I do not think so. According to the late Gusti Ngurah Ketut Sangka, the *kidung* was composed by (or on account of) Cokorda Agung, king of Tabanan, who ruled from 1843 till 1903.[78] When the Cokorda Agung was young there must have been eye-witness accounts of the events described in the *kidung*.

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[76] Resp. *Samboengan Babad Mengwi* by G. Gede Raka (1938), ARA Archive Ministerie van Koloniën, Verbaal 26-4-1940-9; *Babad Arya Mengwi*, U.B. Leiden, Or.16.047. No actor could play the part of Panji more seductively than Dewa Manggis Dimadia, and as the deep-voiced Prakarsa his appearence was imposing.

[77] Wiener ("Visible and Invisible Realms," pp. 381–82) writes in this respect that it was the task of the king to keep the world "upright" (*enteg*), otherwise the realm would experience destruction and disorder (*uwug*).

[78] He is remembered as *Batara Ngeluhur Masatya*, a name which refers to the very special kind of death ritual which was held in 1904.

When and why he composed this story is not known. In general, Balinese writers start to write when they are at least middle-aged. This leads to a date somewhere after 1850, and perhaps even close to the end of the nineteenth century. From the middle of the 1880s warfare swept over large parts of South Bali and affected Gianyar, Bangli, Klungkung, Karangasem, Lombok, and Mengwi, but not Tabanan. I would guess that the king of Tabanan might have chosen the crisis of the 1820s in Mengwi in order to contemplate the present crisis. The text foreshadows, moreover, the fall of Mengwi in June 1891, which was a kind of "remake" of the crisis described in the *kidung*.[79]

The fact that the king of Tabanan, or one of his poets, wrote the *kidung* explains another point which has to do with the alleged commoner perspective. At first sight, one might get the impression that Made Tibung was a commoner. Above I have shown that this was not the case: as a rather wealthy descendant of an *anak astra* he was a *Gusti* or *Gusi*. As a higher-ranking person, the king of Tabanan did not need to bother about such an insignificant title somewhere at the bottom ranks of the nobility. Therefore he called the leader of Padangluah just "Made Tibung."

Despite the high status of the author, the *kidung* uses what might be called a follower or *mekel*-perspective, i.e. between the power holders and the commoners. At this "middle level," political concepts had to be realized through action and that makes the *kidung* so interesting, for it illustrates in detail the dynamics of Balinese politics and why and how things went wrong.

In the first decades of the nineteenth century the political system in Bali was more or less stabilized. There were no new kingdoms added to the existing ones, and the ruling houses tended to close themselves off. No new noble families arose, nor were commoners adopted into the ranks of the nobility; and among the ruling houses exogamous marriages were replaced by endogamous marriages in the category of primary wives (*padmi*). The situation came about not because the nobility felt threatened by commoners, but because they did not need them any longer. The times when a leader shouted in the heat of the battle: "If you fight with me I will make you a Gusti" were over.[80] The ruling houses that had come to power since the end of the seventeenth century had finally managed to rule Bali by themselves. At the same moment, however, a new phenomenon threatened the ruling *puri:* as a result of hypergamous polygamy there had been an enormous growth of the number of lower Gusti, who all wanted a share of their father's wealth and power. The system was, in other words, not threatened from the outside, but from within. This explains also why, for instance, several commoners rose to prominent positions during the nineteenth century in Badung, Gianyar, and Mengwi. Since these *ministeriales* did not belong to the overcrowded world of sons and nephews of lower birth, with their private interests and internal feuds, their position depended almost entirely on the king's protection. He could trust these servants and keep those lower Gusti at least a little bit under control.

As a text, the *Kidung Nderet* is a story told by a leader about leadership and loyalty; it shows how fragile his leadership is and demonstrates that forgetting leads to confusion and destruction. The *kidung* has no plot. No one knows, for instance, what happened to Sagung Nderet; he just disappears. Besides that, the story is open-ended; the focus shifts to yet another conflict in another place, and there the story suddenly ends. Other *uwug* texts also lack a specific plot and have the same kind of open end. Their episodic character can be

[79] See Schulte Nordholt, "Een Balische Dynastie," pp. 167–78, on the fall of Mengwi.

[80] *Babad Surapati*, U.B. Leiden, Or.10.628.

explained if we place these narratives within the larger framework of *babad*. Just like the *dalang* who selects only a fragment from a much larger epos which is known to the audience, the *Kidung Nderet* must be seen as an episode within the continuing story of the Mengwi dynasty as told by the *babad*, with which those who listened to the singing of the *kidung* were also familiar.[81]

Except for one or two texts, the *uwug* as a genre did not survive colonial rule. The Dutch had made an end to warfare, the raw material of the *uwug*. Moreover, it would have been rather unwise for the Balinese to show too many *uwug* to the Dutch, since the texts only confirmed the necessity of colonial rule. Instead, the *uwug* was replaced by the good old *babad*, which started a new career under colonial rule.

Literary Strategies in a Colonial Context

There is considerable variation within the genre of Balinese *babad*. The *Usana Bali* explains the superiority of the Gelgel dynasty by tracing its origin to a divine contest between good and evil forces; in the *Babad Dalem* the conquest of Bali by Majapahit warriors has become the decisive moment in its history; and in the *Babad Mengwi* and *Babad Buleleng* the rise of local Balinese noble houses is explained. Consequently, there has been a process by which the status of the ancestors of Balinese kingship has sunk: from gods and sages, to Majapahit rulers and the Gelgel court, and eventually to the Balinese *patih*-type of warrior.[82]

It must, moreover, be emphasized that the *Usana Bali* and the *Babad Dalem* were by no means the only "standard" texts. There were other texts as well, such as the *Usana Jawa*, which was a rather influential text in Badung during the first half of the nineteenth century. Both Dubois and Friederich, who stayed in Badung, referred to this text when they wrote about the history of the ruling dynasties.[83] Although the *Usana Jawa* also emphasizes the Majapahit origins of the Balinese nobility, it does not stress the central role of Gelgel and Klungkung. Moreover, the text mentions Gajah Mada, instead of Arya Kepakisan, as the ancestor of the Mengwi dynasty!

Since the nineteenth century, and especially since the early twentieth century, an increasing number of *babad* have been written by local *puri*. Starting with a compilation of elements from the *Usana Bali* and the *Babad Dalem*, these texts record the origin and descent of specific local noble clans and the most dramatic moments of their past.

Within this body of local *babad* there is, again, considerable variation. The *Babad Blahbatuh*, for instance, is not primarily structured by a succession of generations; its framework consists of a series of stories about sacred heirlooms around which certain events and generations are grouped. Other *babad*, like the *Babad Arya Tabanan* and another version of the *Babad Mengwi*—the *Babad Mengwi-Sedang*—are rather straightforward accounts in which a series of rather disconnected events is presented in chronological order.[84] Both these texts were written during the colonial period and seem to reflect an effort to record a period of

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[81] I would like to thank Hedi Hinzler for her helpful comments on the relationship between the *kidung* and the *babad*.

[82] Cf. J.-F. Guermonprez, "Rois Divins et Rois Guerriers, Images de la Royauté à Bali," *l'Homme* 95 (1985): 39–70.

[83] R.H.Th. Friederich, "Voorlopig verslag van het eiland Bali," *Verhandelingen Bataviasch Genootschap* (Batavia) 23 (1850): 1–57; P. Dubois ARA, Archive Ministerie van Koloniën, no. 3087, Lettre II.

[84] *Babad Arya Tabanan* (Denpasar: Parisada Hindu Dharma, 1974). *Babad Mengwi-Sedang*, KITLV, Coll. Korn, Or.435, no. 179. The first part of this *babad* resembles the *Babad Mengwi-Buleleng* (U.B. Leiden, Or.9639) which has in fact very little to do with Buleleng and much more with Karangasem and Lombok.

Balinese history that had disappeared after the establishment of Dutch rule. As far as I know, the authors had no direct political purposes regarding the future when they wrote these texts, since both of them were already old and their *puri* had lost their influence within the colonial administration.[85]

Among the texts dealing with the Mengwi dynasty, the *Babad Mengwi-Sedang* is very interesting, since it contradicts in many ways the main version, which I have discussed above. In it, there is only a minor reference to the Javanese origin of the Mengwi dynasty since the story begins in Bali; the kings of Mengwi do not descend from the *patih* of Gelgel but from another, lower, lineage of the descent group of Arya Kepakisan; the revolt against the ruler of Gelgel is not mentioned. Instead, an earlier conflict between the two main lineages of the kingroup is referred to, after which the story almost exclusively concentrates on events in West Bali; instead of one ruler there are at least two kings who founded the *negara* Mengwi; the expansion of the power domain of the Mengwi dynasty did not happen in concentric circles but in an erratic way. The most striking difference is that the composition of the text is not structured by themes. Instead, the author attempted to give a precise chronological account of the history of Mengwi, with the last part consisting of a kind of autobiography (!) in which he tried to justify his controversial role as *patih* of Mengwi during the last decades of the nineteenth century. Although perhaps containing more "reliable facts" for a Western historian, the text had no value at all for my informants. When I showed it to some of them, especially the senior members of the Mengwi dynasty, they reacted with anger: "This is not our *babad*. It is a false one with many mistakes. Moreover, it is an ugly text; it is poorly composed. You can take it with you; no one will be interested."

In sharp contrast to these (proto-)historical *babad*, yet another type of genealogical narrative developed during the colonial period in which literary strategies were applied in order to achieve specific political goals. To this new "sub-genre" belong the *Babad Buleleng* published by Peter Worsley and the *Babad Mengwi* which I have summarized above. In contrast to the *Babad Arya Tabanan* and the *Babad Mengwi-Sedang*, these texts were not intended to preserve a chronological record of the past. On the contrary, both narratives are well-designed constructions of the "golden era" of the dynasties of Buleleng and Mengwi.

It is important to know that both dynasties had lost their power and their *negara* a few decades before the texts were written. The dynasty of Buleleng had ceased to exercise political power in 1872, when "regent-king" Gusti Ngurah Ketut Jelantik was exiled by the Dutch, and the dynasty of Mengwi was overthrown in an internal South Balinese war in 1891. A few descendants of these dynasties managed, however, to survive and became powerful colonial officials. They were the ones who reshaped (fragments or older versions of) the *Babad Buleleng* and the *Babad Mengwi* into "literary" works.[86]

The reason for the change must be sought in the political context of the 1920s. Since the Dutch had conquered their island—the north during the second half of the nineteenth century and the south between 1906 and 1908—the future of the Balinese dynasties depended no longer on the prowess of their leaders and their ability to mobilize manpower, but on their appointment by Dutch colonial officials. Not warfare but the protection by the colonial government safeguarded the survival of some of the former power holders in Bali. In this

[85] The authors belonged to secondary lineages of the royal kin-groups of Tabanan and Mengwi, i.e., *Puri Gede* Krambitan and *Puri* Sedang. The *Babad Arya Tabanan* was written in 1933 and the *Babad Mengwi Sedang* in 1923.

[86] This does not mean, however, that some of the older *babad*, like the first part of the *Babad Dalem*, had no literary qualities.

respect the second part of the 1920s were crucial years. In 1929 the Dutch "re-installed" representatives of the old dynasties as colonial agents in the guise of "traditional rulers."[87]

For the representatives of the former dynasties of Buleleng and Mengwi, in particular, it became imperative that their former *negara* should also be restored. Consequently, their right to exist had to be legitimized, not on the basis of the present situation, but by emphasizing a distant but glorious past. Moreover, the authors had to prove that they, and not other competitors for the throne, should be appointed as the new "restored" kings. One of the most familiar means to demonstrate and legitimize their claims was the *babad*. However, the audience at which the texts were primarily directed had changed, because in the very first place the authors had to convince the Dutch that their claims were legitimate. And that influenced the style and structure of their texts.

In 1928, one year before the colonial *negara* came into existence, the leader of the most powerful lineage of the Mengwi dynasty—Gusti Putu Mayun, *punggawa* of Abiansemal—composed the *Babad Mengwi* discussed above.[88] It is said that he used an earlier version of the *babad*, in which only the origin of the dynasty was recorded.[89] To this original core he added the life and times of the second and third kings of Mengwi. The author deliberately tried to compose a "beautiful," or perfect text by applying literary motifs which he derived from *kakawin* classics. In the eyes of his Balinese audience he succeeded. Informants characterized the restyled *babad* as *"sekadi parwa,"* just like a *parwa* (i.e., a part of the Mahabarata). The text was, in other words, perfect and consequently true.

Elsewhere I have shown that the narrative was part of a much larger project intended to visualize and enhance the authority of Gusti Putu Mayun.[90] An important element in this project was, again, a temple through which the relationship between the *punggawa* and the former *negara*, as described in the *babad*, was commemorated.

Gusti Putu Mayun's authority was not only expressed in "traditional" Balinese terms, but in the colonial language as well. A Malay translation of the *babad* formed the central argument of a large dossier which was sent both to the Dutch colonial officials and also to the Dutch parliament, and finally to Queen Wilhelmina. Furthermore, a separate appendix, also written in Malay, gave a brief genealogical summary of the dynasty from the late eighteenth century up to the 1920s.[91] The relevance of the appendix was twofold: in the first place it demonstrated the genealogical links between the golden era and the present, and especially Gusti Putu Mayun himself; secondly, the decline of the dynasty during the nineteenth century did not need to be mentioned in the *babad* since it could be "isolated" in the appendix. A modern petition, signed by forty-four people, and a report pleading the cause

[87] H. Schulte Nordholt, *Bali: Colonial Conceptions and Political Change 1700–1940: From Shifting Hierarchies to 'Fixed' Order* (Rotterdam: Erasmus University, Comparative Asian Studies Programme 15, 1986), pp. 34–43.

[88] For more details about his background and position as a colonial district officer, and about his efforts to become king of Mengwi, see Schulte Nordholt, "Een Balische Dynastie," pp. 276–89, 295–303.

[89] If this is true, the original part was probably the dialogue between the king and his priest. A number of informants confirmed this story, although a version of the "original" text could not be located.

[90] H. Schulte Nordholt, "Temple and Authority in South Bali 1900–1980," in *State and Society in Bali*, ed. Hildred Geertz, pp. 137–64.

[91] Both the translation and the appendix (*Samboengan Babad Mengwi)* were made by Gusti Gede Raka, a nephew of Gusti Putu Mayun, who was a clerk at the Resident's office in Singaraja.

of Mengwi (in which clever use was made of official Dutch documents) completed the dossier.[92]

Despite all these efforts the Dutch decided not to restore Mengwi. All that remained was the *babad* which is still the only standard narrative about the Mengwi dynasty.

In Buleleng, however, a "literary" *babad* did contribute to the "restoration" of a particular lineage of the former dynasty. That was the *Babad Buleleng*. At the time of its composition there were three factions in Buleleng supporting different candidates for the throne.[93] Gusti Putu Jelantik from *puri* Buleleng was one of these. He had been a colonial official since the beginning of the century, and his acquaintance with Dutch bureaucratic practices was without doubt a considerable advantage. His local prestige in Buleleng, on the other hand, was very weak, because the other factions considered him an "illegitimate and collaborating stranger." In order to counteract this rather damaging image, Gusti Putu Jelantik decided to reinforce his position. As in the case of Gusti Putu Mayun, part of the strategy in Buleleng was to use both text and temple. Gusti Putu Jelantik tried to gain access to the main ancestor temple in the *desa* Panji, which was controlled by his main rival from *Puri* Sukasada, and in 1920 he built a new house temple (*merajan*) in his own *Puri* Buleleng. Around that same year, Gusti Putu Jelantik also wrote the *Babad Buleleng*.[94] He used the *Babad Blahbatuh* and other texts as models and sources in order to compose a new "literary" text about his ancestor Panji Sakti. To this text he added more factual information about the main events of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and a long genealogy which connected Majapahit, Gelgel, and Panji Sakti with his father's generation.[95] Mainly because of his bureaucratic experience but also because he had created enough traditional credibility, Gusti Putu Jelantik was appointed by the Dutch as king of Buleleng.

Gusti Putu Jelantik was in his time also a famous man of letters. He possessed a large collection of *lontar* texts which were taken from the *puri* of Badung, Tabanan, and Klungkung during the military expeditions in 1906 and 1908.[96] As a result, he had access to a wide variety of Old-Javanese and Balinese texts which enabled him to create a new "literary" *babad*.

A superfical comparison between the *Babad Mengwi* and the *Babad Buleleng* reveals some striking similarities in the way literary motifs and specific scenes were used in both texts. It

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[92] ARA Archive Ministerie van Koloniën, Verbaal 26-4-1940-9.

[93] This section is mainly based on interviews held in Buleleng in August 1989.

[94] This information is derived from interviews with Gusti Putu Jelantik's descendants and contradicts Worsley's supposition that the *Babad Buleleng* was written shortly after 1872. See Worsley, *Babad Buleleng*, p. 83.

[95] Around this time there was also a change in the way genealogies were visualized. Genealogies dating from the early colonial period have a "star model" with the ancestor in the center and descendants radiating towards the periphery. Later genealogies follow the European pyramid or "fork model" in which the ancestor stays at the top, with the lineages descending from there.

Worsley underestimated the rivalry between the lineages of Buleleng and Sukasada which goes back to a succession war between two brothers in 1765. The leader of *Puri* Sukasada even pretended not to know the *Babad Buleleng* when I interviewed him. He showed me his own text, but I was not allowed to make a copy of it. Recently the local historian Doctor Soegianto Sastrodiwiryo has summarized the Sukasada version at a seminar on the question whether Panji Sakti must be regarded as a national hero. The paper argues that the main purpose of Panji Sakti's life and career was to restore the Gelgel dynasty after the revolt by *patih* Agung; Soegianto Sastrodiwiryo, "Kepemimpinan I Gusti Panji Sakti dan sumbangannya dalam meletakkan dasar patriotisme di Bali," Seminar Kepemimpinan Raja Ki Gusti Panji Sakti (Singaraja, March 30, 1989).

[96] During the colonial conquest of South Bali, Gusti Putu Jelantik accompanied the Dutch troops as an interpreter.

is, therefore, not too speculative to suppose that the author of the *Babad Mengwi* used the *Babad Buleleng* as a model.

Since the days of R.H.Th. Friederich and H. Neubronner van der Tuuk, the Dutch have greatly respected the importance of the classical texts in Bali. Philologists like C. C. Berg, R. Goris, and C. Hooykaas were sent to the island, and in 1929 the *lontar* library Kirtya Liefrinck-Van der Tuuk was founded in Singaraja.[97] Given these circumstances, the construction of the "literary" *babad*, with its many references to classical texts, can be seen as a clever strategy by rather powerless nobles *vis à vis* their colonial superiors. Since the authors of the two *babad* under discussion were not able to use violence to seize power, they used the power of words to achieve their political goals. Their "literary" texts became, in other words, an important weapon, since warfare had been replaced by bureaucratic careers and literary beauty.

Text and Context

In the preceding pages I have argued that, in order to understand Balinese representations of the past in an integrative way, approaches from literature and history, as well as anthropology, are needed to contextualize these narratives within the dynamics of their own society and the changing complexities of its political structures. I do not believe that simple fact-finding missions aimed at filling the gaps in European archives are very useful. Texts like *babad* and *gaguritan* tell a lot more. Nor am I convinced that a de-contextualized analysis of a text, as a part of a Great Universe of Texts, is in the end extremely relevant. A text is embedded in a social and political world and should be read—as far as possible—within that context. On the other hand, however, I do not intend to reduce the meaning(s) of a text purely to extratextual conditions. A narrative is not just a (passive) reflection of a context, since the author tries actively to formulate or to explain, and to reinterpret and rephrase, in short to create and recreate his world in order to make sense of it. I agree in this respect with Stephen Greenblatt who insists on "the interpenetration of text and world, the necessity of viewing each from the perspective of the other." Applied to Balinese representations of the past, this dialectic of the world-in-the-text and the text-in-the world, as Aletta Biersack calls it,[98] requires detailed historical research. However, to put into practice the theoretical statement that text and context should not be separated, involves a lot of problems and will never fully succeed, since most texts, as we find them, are already separated from their earlier context. Nevertheless, I have tried to bring some of these texts at least a bit closer to their historical contexts, and, in that way, back into social action.

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[97] Concern about Balinese culture and political interests were in this respect closely related to each other. Rumors had it that valuable *lontar* were sold to Western tourists, and the Dutch authorities feared that the literary legacy of Bali might soon disappear if it was not preserved in this library. On the other hand the library, with its emphasis on traditional literature, had to serve a process of re-traditionalization of Balinese society; cf. Schulte Nordolt, *Bali: Colonial Conceptions;* Vickers, *Bali*, pp. 150–55.

One of the effects of the library was that *lontar* were available for a much larger public than before. This may also have stimulated the spread of the *Babad Dalem* as one of the most dominant representations of the Balinese past.

[98] A. Biersack, "Introduction: History and Theory in Anthropology," in *Clio in Oceania: Toward a Historical Anthropology*, ed. Birsack (Washington: Smithonian Institute Press, 1991), p. 8, from which the quotation from S. Greenblatt ("Introduction," in *Representing the English Renaissance*, ed. Greenblatt [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987], p. vii), is also taken.

Most important with regard to the representations of the past which I have looked at above was the fact that they had to be perfect in order to be true. The perfect composition of a text not only made it true, but perhaps even created a reality which went far beyond the text and affected the world. A poorly composed text on the other hand could not be true, explained nothing, and made very little sense.